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**HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**THE WAR**  
**OF**  
**THE INDEPENDENCE**  
**OF**  
**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**

—♦—  
WRITTEN BY  
**CHARLES BOTTA.**

—♦—  
TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN,  
*BY GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS.*

—♦—  
**VOLUME SECOND.**  
—♦—

**PHILADELPHIA:**  
**PRINTED FOR THE TRANSLATOR.**

**J. MAXWELL, PRINTER.**

1820.

\* 9733. B658<sup>2</sup>

EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the second day of December, in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1820, GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

*"History of the War of the Independence of the United States of America. Written by Charles Botta. Translated from the Italian, by George Alexander Otis. Volume second."*

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, intituled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and also to the act entitled "An act supplementary to an act entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.

D. CALDWELL,

*Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.*

1920  
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HISTORY  
OF  
THE AMERICAN WAR.

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BOOK SIXTH.

1775.

THE general attention in England was now turned upon the great spectacle presented by the Americans, and their resistance rekindled the animosity of the different parties. It had been hoped, and the ministers themselves had confidently affirmed, that the late laws, and especially the troops recently despatched to the colonies, would promptly suppress sedition and reduce the factious to obedience. It was not doubted that the partisans of the royal cause, encouraged by the presence of soldiers, and desirous to avoid the vengeance of the laws, would display great energy, and separate themselves from the insurgents, to join the troops of the king, and re-establish the authority of government. It was also firmly believed that the southern provinces, on seeing the storm ready to burst upon their heads, would never espouse the quarrel of the provinces of the north; and it appeared

infallibly certain that the dissensions which alienated the one from the other, would bring about the submission of all. But these hopes having proved entirely deceitful, a general discontent succeeded them, and on all parts the conduct of ministers was censured with asperity. It was deemed intolerable that the soldiers of the king, instead of victoriously keeping the field, should shamefully languish behind the walls of a city without daring to show themselves. The popular movements, which at first were only partial, now extended over the whole continent. The governors in the room of re-establishing the royal authority, were forced to fly from their posts and take refuge on board of ships.

The Americans, heretofore represented as trembling, and ready to humble themselves, were daily acquiring new audacity, and a more formidable energy in resistance. The members of parliament who had combated the influence of ministers, repeated, with loud cries, "that such were the necessary fruits of their incapacity, and of their infatuated obstinacy." "Since they have not been willing, it was said, to grant the colonists the peace they implored, they ought, at least, to have made war upon them with sufficient forces: they have done too much to irritate, too little to subdue. Instead of surprising their adversaries before they could have furnished themselves with means of defence, they have given them a long warning, as if they wished to see them duly prepared; they have chosen to stake the entire fortune of the colonies, and brought into play only a part of their forces; they have dishonoured the British nation not only with the Americans but among all the nations of the world;

they have sullied it with the name of cruel, without having veiled the stigma with the lustre of victory. But we rejoice indeed, and greatly rejoice, to see thus defeated to their utter shame all the projects of the ministers against America. They will perceive, at length, that it is not so easy to establish tyranny in the British empire, as they had presumed in their blind rage to conceive. With a satisfaction not less sincere, do we behold that opposition, so worthy to be admired by all good men, and by all the friends of liberty, which has resulted in the wreck of these Scotch machinations, of this policy of the Stuarts, first attempted in America, but intended eventually for England. We are cheered by the happy augury; and we no longer despair of the public safety, whatever may be the pernicious plots of profligate ministers."

"We have believed, answered the ministers, that the ways of meekness in this commencement of troubles, were most agreeable to the spirit of our laws, and of our national character; that clemency and forbearance ought to form the basis of the conduct of the British government towards its subjects. The ministers have been accused so many times, and upon grounds so frivolous, of wishing to introduce a system of despotism, that in the present occasion they have been very circumspect to keep themselves aloof from all suspicion of a similar desire. What would their adversaries have said, if at the beginning of disturbances they had hurried to arms; if they had sent formidable armies to America, and consigned it to fire and blood? Then would they have raised the voice against tyranny: we have not done it, and their clamours are the same. What have we left then but

to despise them? For is it not demonstrated, that not the love of liberty, but ambition, not the desire of justice, but that of baffling the ministers, have been the motives of their conduct? Before proceeding to the last extremities, our duty was to allow time for reflection and for repentance: for only incurable evils are to be treated with fire and sword.

“ We have borne for a long time, it is true, the effervescence of the Americans: but we should hope that this long-suffering would persuade them of the maternal sentiments of our common country that has endured outrages with magnanimity, which it might have punished at a single blow. The colonists themselves have no doubt of this: they must know the immense superiority of the forces of England. The measures of the government would have opened their eyes already, if they were not continually deceived, excited, and misled by chiefs in delirium, here as well as there, by the cries of an imprudent opposition. But it will soon be seen in earnest, by the vigorous resolutions of government, and the energetic employment it is about to make of all its forces, that it will no more be wanting to itself than forgetful of what is due to the honour of the crown and the interests of the country.

“ The Americans have no more indulgence to expect on our part. They are no longer to be looked upon as British subjects, but as implacable enemies. With as much confidence as justice, we can henceforth overwhelm them with the formidable arm of Great Britain.” Such were the answers of the ministers to the imputations of their adversaries. These excuses might have been valid, if the ministry had



not assailed the Americans with laws far more irritating than open force. For armies, though victorious, may be resisted with glory; but the patience that must tolerate oppression, is without its illusion.

Far from abating with time, these intestine dissensions appeared every day to acquire new activity. The more necessary a consent of opinions became to avert the perils that menaced the country, the more they were divided and marshalled in opposition by the spirit of party. This internal fermentation was of an augury the more fatal, inasmuch as it brought to mind those ancient and sanguinary quarrels which raged in the time of Queen Anne with so much peril to England, between the republicans and the royalists, under the names of Whigs and Tories. The friends and the enemies to the cause of America manifested the same animosity, and the same obstinacy; and there was much appearance that not only America, but England itself, was on the point of breaking out into open discord and civil war.

“The Tories,” it was said on one side, “are themselves the authors of the frequent addresses to the king and parliament, urging that the continent of America should be put to all that fire and sword can inflict: these are the false reporters, these the incendiaries of discord. Bigotted as they are, and infatuated in the maxims of the house of Stuart, neither the example of the evils they have brought upon England, nor the total ruin of this family, which they caused, can illuminate their obstinate minds, and induce them to renounce the cruel principles of tyranny. The bitter fate of the father is not sufficient to divert an obstinate son from pursuing the dangerous path which

led him to destruction: such are all the Tories. They sacrifice their rank, their fortune, their existence, to their prejudices and thirst of domination. When the inauspicious reign of the Stuarts had visited our island with foreign servitude and civil war, then the Tories, trampling upon national honour and public felicity, abandoned themselves to joy. Their maxims coincide with those of the absolute princes of Europe, and they would not blush to place their country in such hands if, in so doing, their ambition might receive a new support. All the countries of Europe are subject to sovereigns whose power is without limits. England alone, by the special favour of Providence, enjoys a moderate and free government; but the Tories would fain subvert it to establish the uniformity of despotism throughout all European countries. Their hearts are contaminated with all the vices of proud, perfidious, and profligate courts: with their infected breath they propagate them, like a pestilence, over the entire nation. They esteem no man but for his baseness: they honour none but the proud and the arrogant. Their superiors they flatter, their inferiors they oppress; the prosperous they envy, the unfortunate they rarely succour, and never but from vain glory. The public felicity becomes in their hands the instrument of slavery, and our submission they deem far more essential than our prosperity. The sovereign good they place in absolute dominion; and the best possible state of society they believe to consist in mute servitude. Revolutions they applaud when they conduct a people to tyranny; they deplore their mischiefs with a hypocritical pity, they exaggerate them with the gloss of words, when liberty is to

be their fruit. The argument of public tranquillity is always upon their lips; but when were they ever heard to speak of the abuses of arbitrary power, of consuming taxes, of the vexations of the powerful, of injuries without reparations, and of outrages without redress? If they are now opposed to the cause of the Americans, it is because it clashes with their plan of attack against the happy free government of our country, and their schemes for introducing into the very heart of the kingdom the laws of Charles and of James. They flatter themselves, that after having strangled the germs of liberty in America, and vanquished those generous spirits, victorious troops will also know how to bend our necks to the same cruel yoke. Such are the thoughts, such the desires that agitate them without intermission, and not the wish to see the return of peace upon that unfortunate continent where they have themselves kindled the flames of war. Let us then prevent such fatal designs, let us preserve in its integrity the inheritance which our ancestors, thanks to their valour, to their generosity, and to the magnanimous enterprizes of the great William III., have handed down to us. Thus shall we serve our country, and perhaps even the house of Brunswick, which cannot without danger show itself ungrateful towards the friends of liberty, nor depart with safety from those maxims which have raised it to the British throne."

The Tories answered these declamations with no little warmth. "It ill becomes the Whigs," they said, "to tax us with cruelty and arrogance, since no one is ignorant what their conduct was, when, in the time of the commonwealth, and even under the



monarchy, they had the supreme power in their hands; then did exile, confiscations and scaffolds spread desolation and ruin over our unhappy country: then prisons and chains were the instruments of popular clemency! If a generous prince had not arrested their career of anarchy and blood, if he had not substituted, by the aid of all good citizens, a system of liberty, so dear to the Tories, England would have seen her last hour, and fallen a prey to foreign enemies. But, what is, in fact, our desire? That in every affair which interests the nation, that in every controversy which divides it, there should be a supreme authority to regulate and to determine them irrevocably; and this authority, we believe, to reside in the king, united with the parliament. But the republicans will not submit to the laws of this legitimate authority, but are in chase of nobody knows what popular authority, which they pretend to consist in the universality of the citizens, as if a tumultuary, ignorant, and partial multitude, should or could judge of objects wherein the eyes even of the most enlightened and prudent discover the greatest difficulties."

"A way must, however, be found to terminate national dissensions; are they to be referred to the decision of a populace ever more apt to be misled by daring and profligate demagogues, than to be guided by men of prudence and of virtue; of a rabble that hunger itself puts in the power of the first intriguer? For this purpose kings and the parliament have been instituted; it is for this end that, in the habitual direction of affairs, as well as in unforeseen and difficult cases, they provide, and watch that the country should experience no detriment."

“In the present dispute with America, have the ministers acted singly and of their own motion? Thinking and the parliament have decreed, have approved all their measures: this consideration ought to have great weight with every man who is a friend to public authority, and to the principles of the constitution. But the Whigs are gasping for the moment to arrive when England, as well as America, shall be a prey to an unbridled multitude, in order to be able to enrich themselves by plunder, to gratify their insatiable ambition, and to operate the total subversion of this free government. These pretended patriots are the sons and representatives of the republicans who desolated the kingdom in the last century. They din the name of liberty continually in our ears, because they desire themselves to exercise tyranny. Under the pretext of the public safety they violate and trample under foot every form, every civil institution; they arrogate to themselves all the plentitude of arbitrary power. If they manifest an utter contempt for the laws which are the protectors of persons, of property, and of honour, their cruelty is not less conspicuous: for an opinion, whether real or supposed, or maliciously imputed, for a suspicion, for a chimera, they fly into a rage, they rush to persecutions; they plunge into misery the fathers of families, the fathers of the country, the best, the most useful, the most respectable citizens. They fawn upon the people so long as they are the weaker; but once become the stronger, they crush them, they decimate them, they starve them, and adding derision to barbarity, they never cease to protest they do it all to render them happy. These friends of liberty are perpetually declaiming against the vices of courts, as

if pillage, both public and secret, the scandalous profusion of ill-gotten wealth, the turpitude of debauch, the violation of the marriage bed, the infamous price extorted from faithful wives to redeem their husbands' blood, the public triumph of courtezans, the baseness of cringing to the vilest of men, as if all the horrors which have signalized the reign of these republicans were good and laudable customs! But whatever be the plots, the wishes, and the hopes of this turbulent race of men, of these partisans of lawless licentiousness, which they attempt in vain to invest with the name of liberty, let them rest assured it is firmly resolved to resist them, to preserve the public tranquillity, to secure to the laws that obedience which is their due, and to carry into execution against the rebellious Americans, those acts which have solemnly emanated from the royal authority, and from that of the parliament. The force of circumstances, the loyalty of the people, and the recollection of the past tyranny of pretended patriots, will cause all their vociferations, all their manœuvres, all their incendiary attempts, to avail them nothing. As for the rest, the Tories, and not their adversaries, are the real friends of liberty: for liberty consists not in calling the populace at every moment to intervene in the direction of state affairs, but in faithfully obeying those fundamental statutes, which are the result of the general will of the nation, and which balance and temper the royal authority by the authority of the people."

With such animosity, with such reciprocal bitterness, the two political parties assailed each other. It appeared inevitable that this must soon lead to some violent convulsion, and all prudent men were seized



with anxious apprehensions. And here, perhaps, is the place to remark how remote are human minds from all moderation, from all sense of decency, when once under the control of party zeal. Assuredly, if at the different epochs of the domination of the royalists and of the republicans, the one party and the other abandoned themselves to culpable excesses, it is not that there were not amongst them men of rectitude, who, if they judged ill, yet meant well; with such, every form of government would be good, provided it was not purely despotic. But the ambitious, a race unfortunately so prolific, are the most fatal scourge in every well constituted state: always in opposition with the laws of their country, they shake off their restraint the first moment they can, and thus pave the way to revolutions and the reign of arbitrary power. The legislator, who is desirous to found a government upon a solid basis, should pay less attention to forms, whether monarchical or republican, than to the establishment of laws calculated to repress the ambitious. It is not for us to pronounce whether such laws have ever yet existed, or whether they could accomplish the end proposed: but we may confidently affirm, that men of moderation are not to be blamed for desiring either a royalty or a republic; the ambitious alone are to be feared and detested, for they are those who cause monarchies to degenerate into tyrannical despotism, and republics into anarchy, more tyrannical still.

Such was the general agitation in England when it was increased by the declaration of Lord Dartmouth, one of the secretaries of state, to Penn and Lee, who had brought the petition of congress addressed to the

king, that no answer would be given to it. The partisans of the Americans expressed their indignation without reserve; they censured with new asperity the impolitic obstinacy of the ministers. The latter had defenders who answered:

“It is time to act; the nation has conceived great hopes; all Europe is in suspense to see what will be the fruit of our tardy resolutions, and the result of our preparations. It is necessary to strike home, and push with vigour this war which Great Britain, with a patience unexampled, has wished to avoid; but to which insolent and contumacious subjects have defied and provoked her by too many outrages.”

This language of the ministerial party acted powerfully upon a nation naturally brave as well as proud; and the public mind became gradually disposed to war, although there still appeared frequent petitions in favour of peace. About this time disastrous news was received of the Newfoundland fisheries. The congress having prohibited all transportation of provisions to these banks, the fishermen, to avoid famishing, were compelled to abandon them precipitately, and repair to other shores. But another misfortune more formidable awaited them: the sea swelling all at once, with unusual fury, rose more than thirty feet above its ordinary level. The irruption was so sudden, that all means of safety were of no avail; more than seven hundred fishing barks were overwhelmed, and perished with their crews. Several large ships also foundered with all on board. The devastation was no less terrible upon land: the progress of the wide inundation was marked with universal destruction. This fatal event made a serious impression in Eng-

land; it was looked upon as a presage of ill. It seemed as if fortune was every where irritated against the British empire. Superstition chilled their spirits. They were induced to form discouraging comparisons.

On the part of the colonists, a propitious sky, abundance of provisions, health of troops, success of arms, multitudes crowding to their standards. On the part of the English, on the contrary, an army besieged, mortal diseases, wounds incurable, toil and pain, famine, every species of suffering; an angry sky, a furious sea, horrible shipwrecks, martial ardour extinct, every thing in rapid declension. The antagonists of government either from ambition or the love of liberty, the merchants from personal interest or zeal for the public good, seized this moment of general discouragement. Petitions against the war arrived from all parts; the cities of London and Bristol were the first to send them. They expatiated upon the blood that was about to be shed, the treasure to be expended, the new enemies to be encountered: it was represented that the obstinacy of the colonists would render even victory too costly; that the victor and the vanquished would be involved in one common ruin. They exhorted, they prayed, they conjured the government to renounce hostile resolutions which promised no good, and threatened so many disasters.

But the ministers were not to be shaken by remonstrances. The animosity of their adversaries was, however, increased by an incident which drew the attention of all; the Earl of Effingham, an officer distinguished for his services, and possessed of an ample fortune, had, upon all occasions, defended with great warmth the cause of the colonists. Not willing to



betray his conscience, he offered the king his resignation; his conduct was greatly applauded; the cities of London, of Dublin and others, commended and thanked him in public letters. Many other officers followed his example; resignations became frequent. Those who from taste give their attention to political matters, will, no doubt, observe upon this occasion, with what facility in England an opinion at variance with that of the government may be openly professed; since its opponents, instead of exposing themselves to its vengeance, often become the objects of public favour. And upon consideration of the enterprises executed in various times by the British nation, and the energy with which it has sustained long wars against the most formidable powers, it is impossible not to perceive how much they deceive themselves who think that a free government enfeebles nations, and that their force can only be completely developed by despotism.

The declamations of the party in opposition, and the numerous resignations of officers, had caused the affair of enlistments to labour extremely. It was in vain that the officers appointed for this service caused the drums to beat, and the royal standard to be erected in the most populous cities; in vain did they promise bounties and exorbitant pay; scarcely a few individuals came to offer their service; Catholics and Protestants, all manifested an equal repugnance.

Not but that among the inhabitants of the northern parts of Great Britain, the regiments found wherewith to recruit themselves; but this resource was altogether inadequate to the exigency. The ministers therefore found themselves in the greatest embarrass-

ment; to extricate themselves from which, they determined to have recourse to foreign aid. With gold, which they had in abundance, they hoped to procure themselves men, of whom they had need. Accordingly, to this end they made overtures to the court of St. Petersburg, in order to obtain twenty thousand Russians, that were to have been transported to America the following spring. They made great dependence upon these soldiers, who, in the preceding war against the Turks, had acquired a brilliant reputation for bravery and discipline. But their hopes were not realized: this government would not consent that its soldiers should enter into foreign service, and for a small sum of gold, shed their blood in a quarrel wherein Russia had no sort of interest. The ministers then turned their views in the direction of the United Provinces. The States General had in their pay some Scotch battalions; and these the English government demanded in order to employ them in the American war. It was hoped that their ancient alliance, and other common interests, would easily determine the States General to comply with this demand. But it appeared of such extreme importance to the States, that not presuming to take the decision of it upon themselves, they chose to consult the provincial assemblies. Those of Zeland and of Utrecht gave their consent, Holland and the others refused. John Derk, of Chapelle, spoke with great force against the proposition in the assembly of Overysse. He said it was too far beneath the dignity of the republic to intermeddle in the quarrels of a foreign nation; that the forces of Holland were too weak, and her commerce too flourishing, for her to interfere so

imprudently in the disputes of others; that if she succoured England against America, other very powerful states, alluding to France, would succour America against England, and that thus the United Provinces would find themselves drawn into a dangerous war. He reminded of the tyranny exercised by the English upon the seas, the forced visit of the Dutch vessels, and the confiscation of their cargoes, under pretext of contraband. He omitted not to paint the cruel character of this war, in which the ferocious Indians were already taken into the English pay. The opinion of the orator prevailed, and there was every motive that it should. The Dutch considered the American cause very similar to that of their ancestors, and it appeared to them intolerable to concur in chastising those who followed their own example. The English party and the French party manifested in this occurrence an astonishing conformity of opinion; the first, because they feared that violent means would force the Americans at length to throw themselves into the arms of France; the second, because they wished to see humbled the pride and the power of the British nation. It is certain, that at this epoch, the prosperity and opulence of England excited the envy of the universe, and that her haughty behaviour filled all hearts with a secret enmity.

But the ministers having despatched numerous agents into Germany, obtained more success with the princes of the houses of Hesse, of Brunswick, and other petty sovereigns of this country. They acceded to a convention which filled the cabinet of Saint James with alacrity and with hope; the ministers were overjoyed that German promptitude should, in so

pressing a need, have counterbalanced English reluctance.

A double advantage was found in the employment of German troops. They had never darkened their minds with abstruse questions of liberty and public law; and the difference of language was a security against the efforts which the Americans might have made to mislead and seduce them to join their party. This apprehension caused the ministry great anxiety with respect to the English soldiers, who spoke the same dialect as the Americans, and went to combat men who defended, or appeared to defend, a cause more favourable to the subjects than to the government.

When the news got abroad in England of the treaty of subsidy with the German princes, it would be difficult to describe the fury of the opponents of the ministry. Many even among their own partisans were heard to condemn their conduct with asperity. They said it was a scandalous thing that the mercenary soldiers of foreign princes should come to interfere in domestic dissensions; that daring and artful ministers might one day take advantage of this fatal example to subvert the established constitution, and to put down all liberty in England itself; that when these soldiers should have terminated their enterprise in distant regions, different pretexts might be found for conducting them into places less remote, and perhaps even into the heart of the kingdom; that this was a state offence, an act of high treason, the having attempted to open the entrance of the British territory to foreign troops without consent of parliament.

It is certain that no resolution of the ministers had



ever produced so much disgust, and so alarming a fermentation among the people, as the present. It rendered more violent the fury of some, alienated others, and appeared to all illegal in principle, perilous in its object, and injurious to the British name; inasmuch as it seemed an admission that the English were not in a situation to adjust of themselves this great quarrel. The disapprobation was general, the cause of the war and the obstinacy of ministers began to be openly condemned.

In the midst of this effervescence the parliament was convoked. But before entering into a description of the debates which took place in this session, it appears to us necessary to relate what were, at this time, the designs of the ministry relative to the American war. Perceiving how odious they were become to the nation for never having consented to hear of any proposition of accord, and for having wanted either the capacity or the will to carry on the war with adequate preparations, they resolved at length to manifest extraordinary vigour, and to employ against the Americans a force so formidable as to leave them no hope of resistance.

They could not but perceive how greatly the reputation of the British arms had already suffered; and they saw how important it was to apply a prompt remedy in order to prevent the worst consequences, and especially a war with the European powers. Although they often affected to congratulate themselves upon the good dispositions of these powers, they were nevertheless persuaded that this neutrality could not continue, if the war drew into length, and always to the prejudice of England. It was easy to believe

that France had eyes open upon what passed, and that she waited but for the occasion to show herself.

The English ministers at this epoch, however stinted the measure of their magnanimity and sagacity, were still not so soft as to be deluded by friendly protestations, which are lavished with the more profusion the more they are void of sincerity. It was known that in all the ports of France the most strenuous exertions were employed in equipping ships of war and accumulating naval munitions, and that the government was animated with an ardent desire to repair recent losses, and to restore all the force and the splendour of the French marine; that the entire nation applauded the views of the court, and demonstrated the utmost promptitude to second them. Besides, it was no longer a mystery that munitions of war were daily expedited from the French ports for America, if not by the orders of the government itself, at least with its tacit concurrence. It was observed, not without extreme jealousy, that the French had lately despatched a numerous fleet to the West Indies, and that their land troops so increased in that quarter, that they already had the appearance of an army prepared to take the field. It had been seen with disquietude that French officers were in conference, for the space of many days, with general Washington, at the camp of Boston, and that they were afterwards admitted to an audience by the congress. The past admonished the English ministry of the future. In no time had war broken out in America that the French and British nations had not taken part in it, the one against the other. It was, therefore natural to think, that such also would be the event this time; it was even the more probable now that interests were at stake of

far greater moment than had ever before been agitated between the two powers. France manifested in her conduct an admirable address. She would not throw off the mask in these beginnings, either because she feared that by engaging prematurely in the defence of the Americans, the English government might be induced to offer them such terms of accommodation as, in reconciling the two parties, would turn their united forces against her; or especially because she was not yet entirely prepared for maritime war. She wished to temporize until her armaments were completed, and until the continuation of reciprocal outrages should have rendered all arrangement impossible. It was also important for her to wait till the Americans, more enlightened with respect to their situation, and encouraged by the success of their arms, should have decided at length to proclaim their independence. All reconciliation then became impracticable; as well on account of the greater exasperation of minds, and the aggravation of offences, as from the absolute contrariety of the scope towards which the two parties tended.

There would no longer be any question of an accord under certain conditions; the separation must then be total. Such was the thought of the French government relative to the time in which it ought to discover itself. But in order that the Americans might not lose all hope, it was determined to grant them clandestinely all the succours, and to make them all the promises proper to inspire them with confidence in a more efficacious co-operation at a suitable time.

Nor could it be doubted, that when France should have resolved to support the Americans without dis-

guise, Spain also would immediately espouse the same cause, as well in consequence of the family compact, as from the identity of interests, and perhaps even from an earnest desire to efface the recent stain of the unfortunate expedition against Algiers.

All these dangers were continually present in the minds of the British ministry; they resolved, therefore, to prevent them by measures as prompt as energetic.

Independently of the arms and munitions which the arsenals and armories of England could furnish in abundance, the government ordained that eighty ships of war should be stationed upon the coasts of America to favour the transportation of troops and of munitions wherever the good of the service might require, to second all the operations of the army, to traverse those of the enemy, and to destroy his marine.

Exclusively of the corps already found in America, it was determined to send thither upwards of forty-two thousand men, of regular troops, between English and Germans; that is twenty-five thousand of the first, and a little more than seventeen thousand of the second. These German troops were composed of four thousand three hundred Brunswickers, twelve thousand three hundred and ninety-four Hessians of the Landgrave, and six hundred and sixty-eight of the hereditary prince of Hesse, count of Hanau.\*

\* England contracted for the German troops upon the conditions following:—She gave a Brunswicker, seven guineas levy money, and four and a half pence sterling daily; a Hessian of the Landgrave, seven guineas bounty, and five and a half pence sterling pay; a Hessian of the hereditary prince, seven guineas bounty, and sixpence sterling a day.



In adding to this number all the recruits of Canada, the corps of American Royalists and Indians, a totality was hoped for of fifty-five thousand men, supposing the companies all complete. But every deduction made, it was deemed a certainty that in any event the army would exceed forty thousand effective combatants; a force that was believed more than sufficient to subdue all America.

The ministers also thought it expedient to accompany the preparations of war with several particular provisions, which they considered as very proper to second the effect of them. Knowing, for example, how much the Americans were in want of money, and that they had no means to procure it but by the way of commerce, they resolved to interrupt it entirely, hoping that private interest would carry it against political obstinacy, and that the absolute failure of metallic currency would subject the bills of credit to a fatal depression. On the other hand, in order not to reduce the Americans to seek their safety in despair, they thought it best to authorize certain royal commissioners to grant individual amnesties. They persuaded themselves that many of them, vanquished by such clemency, would throw themselves into the arms of England, or, at least, that the more timid would lay down arms, and recompose themselves in their accustomed tranquillity. The rest, according to their ideas, might easily then be overpowered. Such were the measures the ministers had matured, and which they intended to submit to the deliberations of parliament.

The king pronounced, on opening the session, a very remarkable discourse; he spoke of the machina-

tions employed in America to seduce the people, and infect them with opinions repugnant to the constitution, and to their subordination towards Great Britain. He said the insurgents now openly avowed their resistance and revolt, and had assumed to themselves all the powers of government; that in order to amuse they had made specious protestations of loyalty, but that in fact they were aiming at independence; that he hoped, however, the spirit of the British nation was too high, and her resources too numerous, tamely to give up that which had been acquired with so many cares, and with so many toils; that it was now become the part of wisdom to put a speedy end to these disorders, by the display of all the forces of the kingdom; but that as clemency was always to be preferred to rigour, his intention was to grant particular pardons, and to withdraw, from the calamities of war, the persons and the places that should give evidence of their fidelity. The ministers moved for the usual address of thanks to the king, and that the measures proposed should be approved.

But Lord John Cavendish answered them with an extreme vehemence, that he could not sufficiently testify his surprise at their obstinacy in pursuing a plan which had already produced such deplorable results.

“ You see one half the empire lost, the other discontented and tottering: a kingdom of late the most prosperous, now sinking under every misfortune: a nation once renowned for its virtues, now contaminated with corruption: and arrived in the train of every vice, losses, discomfiture and shame. The Americans are charged with planning independency; certainly it is not the merit of England that they have

not yet adopted such a resolution, for the ministers have neglected no possible violence to compel them to it. They are charged with dissimulation; but they have constantly affirmed that the terms of reconciliation were those of returning to the state of things existing in 1763. It is desired to send against them numerous armies and formidable fleets; but they are at home, surrounded by friends, and abounding in all things. The English are at an immense distance, stinted in the means of subsistence; having for enemies, climate, winds, and men. And what wealth, what treasures, will not be necessary to subsist your tooops in those distant countries! Impenetrable forests, inaccessible mountains, will serve the Americans, in case of disaster, as so many retreats and fortresses, whence they will rush forth upon you anew. You will, therefore, be under a constant necessity to conquer or die; or what is worse than death, to fly ignominiously to your ships. The Americans will avail themselves of the knowledge of places, which they only have, to harass the British troops, to intercept the ways, to cut off supplies, to surprise out posts, to exhaust, to consume, to temporize and prolong at will the duration of the war. Imagine not that they will expose themselves to the hazard of battles; they will vanquish us by dint of fatigue, placed, as we shall be, at a distance of three thousand miles from our country. It will be easy for them, impossible for us, to receive continual reinforcements. They will know how to use the occasion of their temporary superiority to strike decisive blows; the tardy succours that may arrive to us by the Atlantic, will not prevent our reverses; they will

learn, in our school, the use of arms and the art of war; they will eventually give their masters fatal proofs of their proficiency.

“But let victory be supposed, can there be any doubt that it will be sanguinary, that its results will be lands laid waste, towns desolated by fire, subjects envenomed by implacable hatred, the prosperity of commerce annihilated, and reciprocal distrusts always ready to rekindle war. Long have standing armies been considered as dangerous to liberty; but the protracted and difficult war which you are about to engage in will enormously increase these armies. Is it to dissipate our fears on this point that ministers subsidize these bands of Germans, an excellent race assuredly, but admirably adapted to serve the purposes of the fautors of despotism? I have supposed that we shall be victorious, let us now suppose we should be beaten. Who will restore our treasures exhausted, our commerce annihilated, the spirit of our troops extinguished, our national glory, first source of public virtue, unworthily eclipsed? Who will efface the stigma branded upon the British name? In our reverses we shall not have the consolation of having acted with maturity of reflection, or that of having been taken unawares. The quarrel of America will soon become the quarrel of Europe; and if our country perish not therein, it must be attributed rather to its happy star than to the wisdom of those who govern it. Such is the importance, such are the consequences of the subject, that I cannot but deem it an incomprehensible fact to see the passions allowed full scope on every side, instead of that calm which ought to preside in the consideration of our melancholy situation, and in



the investigation of the most prompt, the most efficacious, and the most expedient remedies. Let us, therefore, unite in praying, in conjuring his majesty to suspend the effects of his anger, and to prevent the running with such precipitation to shed English blood by English hands. Rather let it be studied to calm and to conciliate minds, to search out the causes of our discords, to discover the means which may enable us to rejoin the lacerated parts of the British empire. Let us labour to restore to the government its majesty, to the laws the obedience which is their due, to the parliament its legitimate authority, and to the British people the tranquillity and happiness of which they are so eminently worthy."

The temper of the assembly was favourable; the vehement discourse of Lord Cavendish had made a profound impression upon the minds of all. But the partisans of the ministry answered him with equal warmth.

"We find it not easy to comprehend, they said, how these eloquent orators, who make such parade of their patriotism, can lavish so many pathetic flourishes to justify those who are found in rebellion against the authority of Great Britain; we are ignorant what strange pleasure they can take in embarrassing the government in its operations in the midst of so difficult a crisis. It is equally hard for us to conceive what motives they can have for wishing to demonstrate that the Americans will of necessity prove victorious. That such should be the language of congress, and of the proclamations of Washington, nothing is less surprising; but that it is found in the mouth of an Englishman, of one of the fathers of the

country, that we should see him glory in such assertions, and study to propagate them, is what cannot excite too much astonishment and indignation.

“It is affirmed the Americans are not aiming at independence: this we readily admit, if it is intended to maintain that they are not contending to have, but already possess and exercise this absolute independence. Have they not concentrated in their hands all the authority of government, in coining money, in creating bills of credit, in imposing taxes, in making levies, in declaring war, in committing hostilities, in granting letters of mark and reprisal? But the kind confiding personages, seated in front of us, answer that the colonists protest their devotion, and reject all idea of independency. New doctrine, indeed, that we are to give more credit to words than to facts! But while these credulous beings harangue within these walls, the Americans model and carry into effect a new form of government, no doubt to preserve the ancient constitution, and to unite themselves more intimately with Great Britain!

“They have proposed, we are told, conditions of accommodation; in what do they consist? In consenting to acknowledge the same sovereign. Assuredly they will acknowledge him, provided they may be excused from obeying his orders, and permitted to act their own will entire. And is it desired that England should stoop to such an arrangement, which, if it be not outrageous, is at least ridiculous. The parliament has opened a way of conciliation, whereby, if the right of taxation was not entirely renounced, it was certainly so restricted that the Americans were allowed to tax themselves. But we have to do

with men who are alike insensible to benefits and to clemency. With what words, with what a tone have they received our propositions? The universe knows it, and our secret enemies themselves have been astonished at it. If England must resolve to submit to such degradation, if she must give up honour, so essential to monarchies, if instead of taking arms against an enemy who defies us, who despises the government and the agents of Great Britain, we must bow with humility to his demands continually more imperious, then let us blindly pursue the course which is marked out for us by our adversaries. That to reduce the colonies to obedience is an enterprise which may offer some difficulties, no one undertakes to deny. But the greater the difficulty, the greater the glory.

“Those who would sow discouragement among us, little know the ability of the English generals, and the valour of our soldiers. The powerful house of Bourbon combined against us in the last war, was unable to make us bend; and the king of Prussia has found, in our assistance, the means of resisting the league of the North. England is queen of the seas; she has conquered those same countries which her ungrateful subjects now inhabit; and will she not be able to subdue also them?

“It is not impossible, we admit, that some European powers will take part in this war; especially considering our prosperity, the envy of foreigners, and the arts of these Americans always busied in exciting the whole world against us. But are we to be influenced in our counsels by the desires or by the injustice of others? Let us do what we ought, to prevent what we fear. With arms we may command respect, while a timid policy would expose us to contempt.

“War pursues the weak, but retires from the strong. What chimeras, too, these scrupulous spirits have been dreaming of about those innocent Germans, it is not easy to say. The example of mercenary troops is not new; their employment has always been without danger. Foreign soldiers are not those who could establish servitude upon the soil of England, but minds disposed to slavery; now, the clamours and exaggerations of demagogues more often lead to this, than the schemes of governments themselves. As to these long lamentations over the vices of the present day, we, for our part, have no hesitation to say, that we have a better opinion of a people among whom the sincerest respect is shown for good habits, whose civilization has rendered them famous throughout the world, and who have achieved so many great actions, as well in peace, as in war. These imputations are but the phantoms of a morbid imagination, or the suggestions of the secret rage of these ambitious minds, who persuade themselves that no virtue can exist so long as they are not invested with supreme power. The destiny of Great Britain is now in the balance. After having seen her empire equally flourishing by land and by sea, and her fortune surpass that of all the other states of Christendom, the question is now, whether this prosperity shall continue, whether these rich and powerful colonies, the work of our hands, the fruit of our industry, the object of all our cares, the price of so much treasure and of so much blood, shall henceforth, by the unheard-of ingratitude of their inhabitants themselves, by the artful machinations of their false friends, and of our secret enemies, be dismembered from their ancient



country, and torn forever from the affectionate embraces of their tender mother? patiently to endure an event so calamitous, not to lavish our efforts, our fortunes, our life itself, to prevent its accomplishment, would be a turpitude which has no example in our history, and an opprobrium from which we ought to preserve the British name."

Thus spoke the ministerial orators: the votes were taken, and the motion of Lord Cavendish was rejected. Some other members of the opposition proposed, with as little success, different plans of conciliation with the colonies. The debates were very animated; but the ministers, whose projects were already arranged, and all the preparations of war concluded, had no difficulty in obtaining the rejection of every contrary opinion.

Not satisfied with finding themselves in a situation to attack the insurgents, they wished also to cut off their principal resources, that is, to deprive them of men, arms, and money. The Americans employed a part of their men on board of privateers: they derived their arms and munitions, either secretly, or even openly, from foreign countries; and commerce furnished them with money. Accordingly, the ministers proposed a bill, importing that every species of traffic with the thirteen united colonies should be prohibited; that all American property, whether floating upon the sea or stationed in the ports, should be declared legal prize in favour of the officers and crews of the vessels of the king; that the men taken in the American ships should be compelled to serve indiscriminately, as common sailors, on board those of England; final-

ly, that the crown should be authorized to send commissioners, empowered to grant pardons to such individuals as should appear to merit them, and to declare a colony, in whole or in part, in a state of obedience towards the king; in which case they might exempt them from the rigour of the laws, and restore them to their original condition.

This bill was a consequence of those already passed; it was conformable to the plan of the war which the ministers had adopted, and was generally to be approved. It contained, however, certain articles deserving of animadversion. To wish to make war against the Americans, upon sea as well as upon land, was altogether natural; it was no less judicious to constitute commissioners with authority to grant amnesties, as well to particular individuals as to provinces. But to confiscate, without distinction, private property and public property, to grant the booty to the captors, and force the men found on board the American ships, whatever might be their rank or condition, to serve as common sailors on board the English ships, are acts that cannot fail to be condemned by every sound judging mind. The opposition expressed their abhorrence of these features of the bill in very sharp language; but it passed, notwithstanding, by a triumphant majority.

1776. The parliament having terminated the affairs submitted to their deliberations, the king put an end to the present session, with the assurance that he was not apprehensive of any movement on the part of the European princes, who all manifested a desire to maintain concord and peace. The ministers had obtained from the parliament all they had de-

manded, and they had scarcely a doubt of the favourable issue of their enterprise. It seemed to them impossible that the collectitious soldiery of the congress could hold their arms with a firm grasp in the presence of European troops; they imagined that the bare rumour of the arrival of the English army would suffice to open for it the entrance of the country it was about to conquer.

“ Even supposing, they said, that the colonial troops should presume to keep the field, how can it be imagined, that ill-armed, undisciplined, and so little used as they are to the dangers of war, and to the din of arms, they will be able to make any serious resistance to the veterans of Europe? The first impression will be fatal to the Americans; and the measures which have been taken to sow division among them, will then produce their full effect. Let only a small number submit to the terms of the amnesty, and the multitude will hasten to follow their example: such is the ordinary course of revolutions. In order to accelerate these happy results, it will be essential that the royal commissioners, individuals as influential by their personal authority, as by the splendour of their rank, and the renown of their military achievements, should be always present to second the operations of the army, by seizing the favourable instant for the exercise of their ministry.”

Such were the reasonings and the hopes of the partisans of the government. And such, it must be admitted, was the way of thinking of the greater part of the nation. With some it was the effect of pride, or of confidence in the ministry; with others, of the spirit of party, or of personal interest, man easily believing

what he esteems useful to himself.' There wanted not those, however, whom the love of country inspired with serious apprehensions for the future, or whom the fury of faction urged to announce the most disastrous presages. They judged of the obstinacy of the Americans by their own, and suffered no occasion to escape them of citing the miracles, as they expressed it, wrought in various times, and among manifold people, by the love of liberty. They greatly extolled the constancy, the intrepidity, the prowess of the Americans. Their invectives, their sarcasms, their taunts, were endless against the satellites of tyranny: thus designating the English soldiers, and particularly the German troops. They represented a total loss in defeat, and new dangers in victory; they deplored the blood shed for so iniquitous a cause. Every day there appeared new publications in favour or against the colonists. Some reproached others with having sold their pen, these retorted upon those that they prostituted theirs in defence of licentiousness. A work of Doctor Price, on civil liberty, was particularly distinguished; it was read every where with equal avidity. He received, on this subject, a letter of compliment from the city of London, accompanied with the present of a gold box.

The two brothers Howe, the one admiral of the fleet, and the other general-in-chief of the army in America, were named by the king his commissioners for the re-establishment of peace in the colonies, and for granting pardons to those who should appear worthy of the royal mercy. Sir Peter Parker and Lord Cornwallis were already, some time since, embarked for America, with several corps of troops.



Admiral Hotham, and generals Burgoyne and Philipps followed them with other English and German divisions.

While these things were passing in England, the provincials, who besieged Boston, began to entertain hopes not only of becoming masters of the city, but even of making the whole garrison prisoners, and of destroying the British squadron anchored in the port and bay. They expected impatiently that the cold would become so rigorous as to freeze the waters of the harbour, and the rivers that flow into it. The frost usually set in about the last of December, and they calculated that at this season the ice would be strong enough to enable them to march dry-shod across the arm of the sea, which separates the peninsula from the continent, where they were encamped. The English, in such case, would not have been able to resist the much superior forces of the American army. But contrary to the ordinary course, the winter was extremely moderate; the provincials vainly awaited the coming of ice. In this hope they had kept themselves tranquil in their quarters; the delay was advantageous to the garrison. But the month of March arrived to re-animate operations; the Americans panted to put an end, by a vigorous effort, to this long and tiresome seige. Their ardour prompted it, necessity required it. The hostile speech of the king, at the meeting of parliament, was arrived in America, and copies of it were circulated in the camp. It was announced there, also, that the first petition of congress had been rejected. The whole army manifested the utmost indignation at this intelligence; the royal speech was burnt in public by the infuriate sol-

diers. They changed, at this time, the red ground of their banners, and striped them with thirteen lists, as an emblem of the number, and of the union of the thirteen colonies.

The congress, at the news of the rigorous proceedings of the government, and particularly of the act relating to commerce, and the engagement of the German troops, saw plainly that no other resources were left them but in the way of arms. Without loss of time, wishing to take advantage of the universal irritation of the people, they urgently recommended to Washington to renounce all delay, to brave all dangers, and at whatever cost, to terminate the siege of Boston, and effectuate the expulsion of the enemy from the shelter of its walls. They foresaw that this army would soon be necessary to oppose the British forces at other points, and to protect other parts of the American territory. It was presumed that the English would direct their principal attack against the weakest places, and serious apprehensions were felt particularly for the city of New-York. It was, therefore, extremely important to dislodge the enemy from the position of Boston, since otherwise he might, afterwards, operate against the rear of the American army. Pressed by positive orders, and stimulated at once by the force of circumstances and the desire of glory, Washington reflected upon the most efficacious means to secure the success of his enterprize. He was not without hopes of being able to carry the city by assault.

The part of the Cove of Boston, contiguous to Cambridge and Roxbury, was frozen, which greatly facilitated the passage; and for crossing the water that

remained up to the walls of Boston, a great number of boats had been provided. In addition to this, two floating batteries were stationed at the mouth of the river of Cambridge. It was known that the garrison suffered severely for the want of provisions, and that it was greatly enfeebled by fatigues and maladies. The commander-in-chief had, besides, the greatest confidence in the valour and constancy of his soldiers. He accordingly assembled all the generals, and proposed to them his plan of attack. Ward and Gates, both officers of great distinction, opposed it; alleging, that without incurring so great a risk, the enemy might be forced to evacuate Boston by occupying the heights of Dorchester, which command the entire city. Washington did not conceal his dissatisfaction at this opposition; but he was constrained to acquiesce in the opinion of the majority. It was resolved, therefore, to take the position of the heights. At the suggestion of generals Ward, Thomas, and Spencer, a great quantity of fascines and gabions had been prepared for this expedition. The fortresses of Ticonderoga and of Crown-Point had furnished heavy cannon, and a sufficient number of howitzers and mortars. It appears that general Howe, who was naturally very circumspect, thought himself too feeble to prevent the execution of this design, which was to be, however, decisive of the total issue of the siege.

The Americans, in order to occupy the attention of the enemy in another part, erected strong batteries upon the shore at Cobb's Hill, at Lechmere's Point, at Phipps Farm, and at Lambsdam, near Roxbury. They opened a terrible fire in the night of the second of March; the bombs, at every instant, fell into the

city. The garrison was incessantly employed in extinguishing the flames of the houses in combustion, and in all the different services that are necessary in such circumstances. During this time the Americans prepared themselves with ardour, or rather with joy, to take possession of the heights. Companies of militia arrived from all parts to re-enforce the army. The night of the fourth of March was selected for the expedition; the chiefs hoped that the recollection of the events of the fifth of March, 1770, when the first blood had been shed in Boston by the English, would inflame, with new ardour, and a thirst of vengeance, those spirits already so resolute in their cause.

Accordingly, in the evening of the fourth, all the arrangements being made, the Americans proceeded in profound silence towards the peninsula of Dorchester. The obscurity of the night was propitious, and the wind favourable, since it could not bear to the enemy the little noise which it was impossible to avoid. The frost had rendered the roads easy. The batteries of Phipps Farm, and those of Roxbury, incessantly fulminated with a stupendous roar.

Eight hundred men composed the van guard; it was followed by carriages filled with utensils of intrenchment, and twelve hundred pioneers led by general Thomas. In the rear guard were three hundred carts of fascines, of gabions, and of bundles of hay, destined to cover the flank of the troops in the passage of the isthmus of Dorchester, which, being very low, was exposed to be raked on both sides by the artillery of the English vessels.

All succeeded perfectly: the Americans arrived upon the heights, not only without being molested, but even without being perceived by the enemy.



They set themselves to work with an activity so prodigious, that by ten o'clock at night they had already constructed two forts, in condition to shelter them from small arms and grape shot; one upon the height nearest to the city, and the other upon that which looks towards Castle Island. The day appeared; but it prevented not the provincials from continuing their works, without any movement being made on the part of the garrison. At length, when the haze of the morning was entirely dissipated, the English discovered, with extreme surprise, the new fortifications of the Americans.

The English admiral having examined them, declared, that if the enemy was not dislodged from this position, his vessels could no longer remain in the harbour without the most imminent hazard of total destruction. The city itself was exposed to be demolished to its foundations, at the pleasure of the provincials. The communication, also, between the troops that guarded the isthmus of Boston, and those within the town, became extremely difficult and dangerous. The artillery of the Americans battered the strand, whence the English would have to embark in case of retreat. There was no other choice, therefore, left them, but either to drive the colonists from this station by dint of force, or to evacuate the city altogether.

General Howe decided for the attack, and made his dispositions accordingly. Washington, on his part, having perceived the design, prepared himself to repel it. The intrenchments were perfected with diligence; the militia was assembled from all the neighbouring towns, and signals were concerted to be given upon all the eminences which form a spe-

cies of cincture about all the shore of Boston, from Roxbury to Mystic river, in order to transmit intelligence and orders with rapidity from one point to the other.

Washington exhorted his soldiers to bear in mind the fifth of March. Nor did he restrict himself to defensive measures; he thought also of the means of falling, himself, upon the enemy, if, during or after the battle, any favourable occasion should present itself. If the besieged, as he hoped, should experience a total defeat in the assault of Dorchester, his intention was to embark from Cambridge four thousand chosen men, who rapidly crossing the arm of the sea, should take advantage of the tumult and confusion to attempt the assault of the town. General Sullivan commanded the first division; General Greene the second. An attack was expected like that of Charlestown, and a battle like that of Breed's Hill. General Howe ordered ladders to be prepared to scale the works of the Americans. He directed Lord Percy to embark at the head of a considerable corps, and to land upon the flats near the point, opposite Castle Island. The Americans, excited by the remembrance of the anniversary, and of the battle of Breed's Hill, and by the continual exhortations of their chiefs, expected them, not only without fear, but with alacrity; but the tide ebbed, and the wind blew with such violence, that the passage over became impossible. General Howe was compelled to defer the attack to early the following morning. A tempest arose during the night, and when the day dawned, the sea was still excessively agitated. A violent rain came to increase the obstacles: the English general kept himself quiet.

But the Americans made profit of this delay; they erected a third redoubt, and completed the other works. Colonel Mifflin had prepared a great number of hogsheads full of stones and of sand, in order to roll them upon the enemy when he should march up to the assault, to break his ranks, and throw him into a confusion that might smooth the way to his defeat.

Having diligently surveyed all these dispositions, the English persuaded themselves that the contemplated enterprise offered difficulties almost insurmountable. They reflected that a repulse, or even a victory so sanguinary as that of Breed's Hill, would expose to a jeopardy too serious, the English interests in America. Even in case of success, it was to be considered that the garrison was not sufficiently numerous to be able, without hazard, to keep possession of the peninsula of Dorchester, having already to guard not only the city, but the peninsula of Charlestown. The battle was rather necessary, and victory desirable, to save the reputation of the royal arms, than to decide the total event of things upon these shores. The advantages, therefore, could not compensate the dangers. Besides, the port of Boston was far from being perfectly accommodate to the future operations of the army that was expected from England; and general Howe himself had, some length of time before, received instructions from Lord Dartmouth, one of the Secretaries of State, to evacuate the city, and to establish himself at New-York.

The want of a sufficient number of vessels had hitherto prevented him from executing this order. Upon all these considerations, the English generals

determined to abandon Boston to the power of the provincials.

This retreat, however, presented great difficulties. An hundred and fifty transports, great and small, appeared scarcely adequate to the accommodation of ten thousand men, the number to which the crews and the garrison amounted, without comprehending such of the inhabitants, as having shown themselves favourable to the royal cause, could not, with safety, remain. The passage was long and difficult; for with these emaciated and enfeebled troops it could not be attempted to operate any descent upon the coasts. It was even believed to be scarcely possible to effect a landing at New York, although the city was absolutely without defence on the part of the sea. The surest course appeared to be to gain the port of Halifax; but besides the want of provisions, which was excessive, the season was very unfavourable for this voyage, at all times dangerous.

The winds that prevailed then blew violently from the north-east, and might drive the fleet off to the West Indies, and the vessels were by no means stocked with provisions for such a voyage. Besides, the territory of Halifax was a sterile country, from which no resource could be expected, and no provision could have been previously made there, since the evacuation of Boston and retreat to Halifax were events not anticipated. Nor could the soldiers perceive without discouragement that the necessity of things impelled them towards the north, apprized as they were that the future operations of the English army were to take place in the provinces of the centre, and even in those of the south. But their generals had no longer the



liberty of choice. The Americans however being able by the fire of their artillery to interpose the greatest obstacles to the embarkation of the British troops, general Howe deliberated upon the means of obviating this inconvenience. Having assembled the select men of Boston, he declared to them, that the city being no longer of any use to the king, he was resolved to abandon it, provided that Washington would not oppose his departure. He pointed to the combustible materials he had caused to be prepared to set fire, in an instant, to the city, if the provincials should molest him in any shape. He invited them to reflect upon all the dangers which might result, for them and for their habitations, from a battle fought within the walls; and he assured them that his personal intention was to withdraw peaceably, if the Americans were disposed, on their part, to act in the same manner. He exhorted them, therefore, to repair to the presence of Washington, and to inform him of what they had now heard.

The select men waited upon the American general, and made him an affecting representation of the situation of the city. It appears, from what followed, that he consented to the conditions demanded; but the articles of the truce were not written. It has been pretended that one of them was that the besieged should leave their munitions of war; this, however, cannot be affirmed with assurance. The munitions were, indeed, left; but it is not known whether it was by convention, or from necessity. The Americans remained quiet spectators of the retreat of the English. But the city presented a melancholy spectacle, notwithstanding the orders of general Howe, all was

havoc and confusion. Fifteen hundred loyalists, with their families, and their most valuable effects, hastened, with infinite dejection of mind, to abandon a residence which had been so dear to them, and where they had so long enjoyed felicity. The fathers carrying burthens, the mothers their children, ran weeping towards the ships; the last salutations, the farewell embraces of those who departed, and of those who remained, the sick, the wounded, the aged, the infants, would have moved, with compassion, the witnesses of their distress, if the care of their own safety had not absorbed the attention of all.

The carts and beasts of burthen were become the occasion of sharp disputes between the inhabitants who had retained them, and the soldiers who wished to employ them. The disorder was also increased by the animosity that prevailed between the soldiers of the garrison and those of the fleet; they reproached each other, mutually, as the authors of their common misfortune. With one accord, however, they complained of the coldness and ingratitude of their country, which seemed to have abandoned, or rather to have forgotten them upon these distant shores, a prey to so much misery, and to so many dangers. For since the month of October, general Howe had not received, from England, any order or intelligence whatever, which testified that the government still existed, and had not lost sight of the army of Boston.

Meanwhile, a desperate band of soldiers and sailors took advantage of the confusion to force doors, and pillage the houses and shops. They destroyed what they could not carry away. The entire city was devoted to devastation, and it was feared every mo-

ment that the flames would break out to consummate its destruction.

The fifteenth of March general Howe issued a proclamation, forbidding every inhabitant to go out of his house before eleven o'clock in the morning, in order not to disturb the embarkation of the troops, which was to have taken place on this day. But an east wind prevented their departure; and to pass the time they returned to pillaging. In the meanwhile the Americans had constructed a redoubt upon the point of Nook's Hill, in the peninsula of Dorchester, and having furnished it with artillery, they entirely commanded the isthmus of Boston, and all the southern part of the town. It was even to be feared that they would occupy Noddle's Island, and establish batteries which, sweeping the surface of the water across the harbour, would have entirely interdicted the passage to the ships, and reduced the garrison to the necessity of yielding at discretion. All delay became dangerous; consequently the British troops and the loyalists began to embark the seventeenth of March, at four in the morning; at ten, all were on board. The vessels were over-laden with men and baggage; provisions were scanty, confusion was every where. The rear-guard was scarcely out of the city when Washington entered it on the other side, with colours displayed, drums beating, and all the forms of victory and of triumph. He was received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of gratitude and respect due to a deliverer. Their joy broke forth with the more vivacity, as their sufferings had been long and cruel. For more than sixteen months they had endured hunger, thirst, cold, and the outrages of an in-

solent soldiery who deemed them rebels. The most necessary articles of food were risen to exorbitant prices.

\* Horse flesh was not refused by those who could procure it. For want of fuel, the pews and benches of churches were taken for this purpose; the counters and partitions of warehouses were applied to the same use; and even houses, not inhabited, were demolished for the sake of the wood. The English left a great quantity of artillery and munitions. Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of different caliber, were found in Boston, in Castle Island, and in the intrenchments of Bunker's Hill, and of the Neck. The English had attempted, but with little success, in their haste, to destroy or to spike these last pieces; others had been thrown into the sea, but they were recovered. There were found, besides, four mortars, a considerable quantity of coal, of wheat, and of other grains, and one hundred and fifty horses.

Thus, after a siege as long as tiresome, the capital of the province of Massachusetts fell again into the power of the Americans. The joy of this happy event was felt, with enthusiasm, by all the confederation. It acquired an especial importance by the impulse it could not fail to impart to the public spirit, and even by the in-

\* Provisions were become so scarce at Boston, that a pound of fresh fish cost twelve pence sterling, a goose eight shillings and four pence, a turkey twelve shillings and sixpence, a duck four shillings and two pence, hams two shillings and a penny per pound. Vegetables were altogether wanting. A sheep cost thirty-five shillings sterling, apples thirty-three shillings and four pence per barrel. Fire wood forty-one shillings and eight pence the cord; and finally, it was not to be procured at any price.



fluence it was likely to have upon future operations. We have here a new occasion to remark, with surprise, the blindness and presumption of the British ministry, who, instead of taking all the necessary measures to secure success, from the commencement of the war, seemed, of preference, to adopt all those that were calculated to injure its cause. Whether from having listened to English pride, or from having trusted to unfaithful reports, or finally, from having neglected the examples of history, the ministers had persuaded themselves that the provincials would shrink at the aspect of regular troops, and that their ardour would be converted immediately into a general terror.

They omitted to reflect that the very nature of things had excited, and already, for a length of time, had nourished the American revolution.

The colonists were become rich and powerful, and their original enthusiasm was far from being chilled. Misled by its prepossessions, the government knew not how to employ its forces; it refused to send succours when it was yet time, and hastened to lavish them when it was now too late.

The Americans, come into possession of Boston immediately confiscated the property, moveable and immoveable, of the emigrants who had accompanied general Howe to Halifax. The sale was made at auction, and the produce applied to the exigencies of the public. The loyalists who had remained, were prosecuted and declared enemies and traitors to the country: their possessions were in like manner confiscated and sold. The first care of the Bostonians was directed to the necessity of fortifying their city, to

preserve it, in future, from the calamities they had recently experienced. The works were commenced without delay, and urged with extreme diligence; all the citizens, in turn, contributed their labour. A French engineer, some Americans and four Prussians, had the direction of the whole. It was not, however, expected to render Boston a place of strength, capable of sustaining a regular siege; it sufficed to place it in a situation to resist a sudden attack.

Certain movements of the provincials, and especially the care they had taken to occupy some of the little islands situated in the bay of Boston, authorized the belief, that it was their intention to attack Fort William, erected upon Castle Island. General Howe, perceiving that the possession of this fort would enable them to defend the approaches of the city against the English ships, thought it expedient to dismantle and burn it previous to his departure. He was unable, however, to carry away its artillery, which he contented himself with spiking very precipitately.

Contrary winds, succeeded by a dead calm, prevented the English fleet, during more than a week, from getting out to sea. But at length it succeeded; and contrary to all expectation, considering the season, its passage to the port of Halifax was fortunate and rapid.

Admiral Shuldham had left in the waters of Boston, a squadron, under the command of commodore Bankes, to protect the navigation of the vessels of the king, which, in ignorance of the evacuation of the city, might continue their voyage towards it. This

precaution had not all the effect that was desired; the bay being extensive, the cruisers lay in concealment behind the numerous little islands with which it is interspersed, and sprung suddenly upon the ships that presented themselves without mistrust. Among others, captain Manly took a prize laden with an immense cargo of provisions.

Washington, ignorant what were the plans of general Howe, and what direction the British fleet had taken, was not without disquietude for the city of New-York. He wrote, in consequence, to brigadier-general Lord Sterling, who commanded there, advising him to stand prepared, and that he had sent him a re-enforcement of five battalions and several companies of riflemen. But the royal troops were very far from being in a condition to undertake any thing against that city: they esteemed themselves very fortunate in arriving sound and safe at Halifax. Before proceeding to further operations, general Howe chose to refresh his troops, and wait for the re-enforcements that were expected from England.

The affairs of congress assumed an aspect no less prosperous in North Carolina than in Massachusetts; in which, however, very serious commotions had begun to manifest themselves.

Governor Martin, although he had taken refuge on board the vessels of the king, did not, however, remain idle; and he busied himself incessantly in devising new machinations to retrieve the royal cause in his province. He flattered himself with the greater hopes of success, as he knew that admiral Peter Parker, and Lord Cornwallis, were departed from the ports of England for an expedition against the Caro-

linas. He was also informed that general Clinton, with some companies, was on his way to join him at Cape Fear, situated upon the river of the same name, and not far from Wilmington. At the head of these united forces, increased by the Scotch highlanders and the *regulators*, both formidable to the disaffected from their experience in the use of arms, and their ardent zeal for England, he had no doubt, whatever, but that he could create a revolt in the province, and reduce it anew under the authority of the king. After having concerted with all his partisans, he erected the royal standard, summoning all the inhabitants to rally round it in defence of country and lawful authority against rebels. To render more efficacious the succours of the highlanders and of the regulators, as well as of all the other loyalists, he named colonel Macdonald, an officer warmly devoted to the royal cause, captain-general of all the levies, that he might organize them into regular corps.

This plan succeeded according to his hopes. The concourse at Cross-Creek swelled every day; the patriots were threatened with an attack in this part, unless a prompt remedy was applied. The provincial assembly opened their eyes upon the danger, and despatched, with all speed, against this head of loyalists, all the militia that were in preparation; and, at the same time, directed that others should be assembled from all parts of the province.

The two parties that divided Carolina thus found themselves, marshalled the one against the other, animated with an equal fury.

The patriots were commanded by general Moore; he went to take post, with a few pieces of cannon, in



front of the loyalists, at a place called Rock-Fish Bridge, where, having broken the bridge, he intrenched himself. Macdonald summoned him to come and put himself under the royal standard, or to expect to be treated as an enemy. Moore answered him that he had himself to take an oath of fidelity to Congress, and to lay down arms, and that, in so doing, he should be received as a friend. During these negotiations, which Moore had the address to draw into length, his forces so increased that he soon acquired a decided superiority over his adversary. Macdonald, at length, perceived the danger of his situation; and though he was already surrounded on every side by the provincials, he disengaged himself with equal ability and courage. Marching rapidly, and without interruption, interposing continually between himself and his pursuers, rivers, forests, and difficult defiles, he measured a space of eighty miles in defiance of the vigilance of the enemy, eager to cut off his retreat, and arrived at Moore's Creek, sixteen miles from Wilmington.

There he hoped to be joined by governor Martin and general Clinton, who were already arrived at Cape Fear. But the provincials, who had never ceased to follow him, not only prevented this junction, but reduced him to the necessity of giving battle. He displayed in it an extreme bravery; but captain Macleod, and many other of his officers having been killed, his troops were seized with a panic and fled, leaving their general in the midst of his enemies. Macdonald was made prisoner, with many other loyalists. Their enemies derived an immense advantage from this victory; for if Macdonald had been victor,

or if he could only have effected his junction with governor Martin and general Clinton, they might then have waited at Cape Fear for the re-enforcements that were coming from Ireland; and the affairs of the Congress would have been very near desperate in the southern provinces. The Carolinians learned, besides, to know their own strength, and refuted the opinion which had generally prevailed of the weakness of North Carolina. They had combated, with success, the *regulators* and the Scotch, who had appeared to them at first so formidable; and in the space of ten days they had assembled ten thousand men, full of courage and resolution.

The precipitation of the loyalists was the cause of their ruin; if they had temporized until the arrival of succours from Europe, and then only raised the standard of the king, they might, without doubt, have struck a decisive blow, and thus have caused the balance to incline in their favour in the southern provinces.

We have left Lord Dunmore cruising with his vessels upon the coast of Virginia; he continued still for a long time upon this station. But all the places of landing being diligently guarded by the militia, far from being able to make any impression, he could not even procure the sustenance necessary for the multitude accumulated on board his squadron. Consequently the excessive heats, the corruption of the water and of the provisions, and the crowd of men in the ships, generated offensive and deleterious miasmata. A pestilential malady carried off, in mass, the whites and the blacks; but it was especially mortal among the latter. In this deplorable state the squad-

ron of Lord Dunmore wandered from island to island, from shore to shore. He found, upon all points, the inhabitants armed to repulse him, and he wanted forces to open himself a passage through them. To crown the measure of misfortune, the winds drove a part of the ships upon the coasts of Virginia, where the wretched fugitives, become the prisoners of their own fellow citizens, did but exchange this pestiferous abode for dark and horrible dungeons. At length to escape a certain death upon these shores, lord Dunmore resolved to burn the ships of least value. The miserable wrecks of soldiers and of Virginians, buffeted by tempests, devoured by famine, by thirst, and by diseases, went to seek refuge in the Floridas, the Bermudas, and the West Indies. Thus delivered of its enemy, the province recovered tranquillity. Such was the catastrophe that terminated the expedition of Lord Dunmore against Virginia, and the result of his plan of revolt of negroes against their masters.

Meanwhile the Congress had not remitted their preparations of maritime war; they felt the necessity of protecting their own coasts from the insults of the enemy's cruisers, as also the extreme utility of intercepting the store-ships of the English armies. There was no deficiency either of materials suitable for the construction of vessels, or of excellent mariners; the interruption of commerce and of the fisheries having left a very great number of them without employment. Accordingly the work was pushed with such ardour in the navy-yards of Maryland, of Philadelphia, and of Rhode Island, that upon the commencement of the year were seen floating in the waters of the Delaware

five frigates, or corvettes, and thirteen gun sloops,\* completely equipped and armed.

The Congress had ordained, besides, that thirteen frigates, of thirty-six guns each, should be constructed with all possible expedition. Then in order to form the seamen to the evolutions of maritime war, and, at the same time, to procure themselves arms and munitions, and especially powder, they ordered Ezechiel Hopkins, captain-general of the fleet, to make sail for the Bahama Islands. He put to sea about the middle of February, and after a prosperous voyage arrived, in the beginning of March, at Abaco, one of these islands.

Being informed that the English had amassed a considerable quantity of munitions in that of Providence, he made a sudden descent there, and seized them. The Americans found many pieces of cannon, with bombs, balls, and one hundred and fifty casks of powder, the capital object of the expedition. In their return they combated honourably a British frigate, and captured a brig. The squadron of Congress, with its prizes, entered the port of New London. Frequent engagements also took place in the bay of Boston, between the ships of commodore Banks, and those of Massachusetts. One of the most remarkable was that in which captain Mugford

\*The frigates were the Alfred and the Columbus, of thirty-two guns; the corvettes, the Andreas Doria of sixteen, the Sebastian Cabot of fourteen, and the Providence of twelve. The thirteen gun-boats bore the names following:—The Washington, the Dickinson, the Chatham, the Camden, the Burke, the Effingham, the Bull-Dog, the Franklin, the Congress, the Experiment, the Hancock, the Adams, and the Warren.



captured a transport laden with a great quantity of arms and military stores.

The navy of Congress not only distinguished itself upon the coasts, but also, what was scarcely to have been hoped, in the open sea. Its success perceptibly increased the confidence and the hope of the Americans; they accustomed themselves, by little and little, to act as a nation enjoying its entire independence.

The desire to see it universally acknowledged was excited in some, and fortified with others, in proportion to the prosperous result of their efforts. They were not crowned with the same happy success in Canada. Arnold, who had continued with his feeble corps the siege of Quebec, found himself oppressed by a multitude of obstacles. The re-enforcements the Congress had promised him, arrived but slowly and by parties, either because the severity of the season rendered the roads nearly impracticable, or, because the ill success of the assault of Quebec had considerably damped the ardour with which the novelty and brilliant commencement of this expedition had inspired the Americans.

It appeared that Congress itself, either distracted by too many cares, or wanting the necessary means, had neglected to take proper measures for conducting the Canadian war to the object desired. In vain had the greater part of the garrison of Montreal been marched to Quebec, the soldiers under Arnold still scarcely amounted to a thousand effective men.

The Canadians, who at first had welcomed the Americans with cordiality, and had supplied them with

all that was in their power, finding themselves afterwards exposed to various excesses on the part of this undisciplined troop, had passed from benevolence to aversion. It must be admitted, they had too much reason for it. The Americans had not only omitted to conciliate the countenance of the catholic priests, which irritated their self-love, but they had even overwhelmed them with contempt, which excited among them detestation and a thirst of vengeance. The insinuations of governor Carleton and of all his partisans succeeded, therefore, without difficulty, in persuading them to refuse the sacraments to all those who had declared for the Americans. This refusal produced an impression so serious upon the minds of the Canadians, that the provincials, perceiving how prejudicial it might prove to their interests, despatched a catholic priest from Maryland, in order to dispense to the Canadians all the spiritual succours of which they were deprived. But this remedy was employed too late. Affairs already assumed the most discouraging aspect.

A French gentleman of intrepidity, named Beaujeu, had assembled a corps of nobles and other inhabitants with whom he had influence, at the head of whom he had taken the field. The Americans had engaged him with advantage; but they had no means to repair the injury their cause had suffered, as well from its known weakness, as from the outrages committed against the inhabitants of the country. To increase their distress, the season approached in which the re-enforcements, already known to be departed from England, were about to arrive. The river St. Lawrence, no longer obstructed with ice, opened them

a free passage up to the city of Quebec. It would have been too hazardous to await them with forces so disproportionate.

In this critical position, Arnold, who had recently been promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, prepared with a courage as great as his resources were feeble to reduce the besieged city. Its possession would have rendered the enmity of the Canadians in a great measure impotent, and the English troops would thus have lost their communication with the upper parts of the province.

Arnold was not entirely without hope of success. Governor Carleton experienced a dearth, rendered more and more afflicting by the vigilance and success with which the provincials intercepted all his convoys of provisions: Nor did they cease, besides, to harass and fatigue the garrison by false attacks and multiplied stratagems, hoping from its weakness to find sooner or later some way to surprise the place.

They had approached the walls to open the trench, and had erected batteries upon the banks of the river, in order to cannonade the English vessels. They fired with red hot balls, and lanced different sorts of fire-works into the city; but general Carleton watched attentively and disconcerted all their manœuvres. The obstacles that Arnold encountered, were carried to the utmost by the small pox, a malady so formidable in these climates. The re-enforcements he expected, arrived greatly reduced by this scourge; the soldiers fled from terror; or were infected by the contagion; the ranks thinned continually. It was at this epoch that general Thomas took the command. He wished before raising the siege, to make a last

effort, by setting fire to the ships of the governor, and seizing the occasion of the disorder to attempt the assault. The river being already free from ice before Quebec, on the night of the third of May, the Americans sent down a fire-ship; their ladders were prepared for the assault. The English having taken the alarm, began to fire; the men who managed the fire-ship, finding themselves discovered, set her on fire.

In this posture of affairs, having no longer any thing to expect, either from a regular siege or a scalade, seeing the troops diminish daily, as well in number as in courage, having no more provisions left than for three days, and fearing, at every moment, the arrival of the English re-enforcements, the American general resolved to abandon the expedition entirely, and to retire towards Montreal. The very morning of the day appointed for raising the siege, the *Isis* ship of fifty-four guns, arrived in sight of Quebec, with the frigate *Surprise*, and another vessel of less force.

With equal industry and peril, they had ventured to navigate the river from its mouth, in the midst of enormous masses of floating ice. They had on board several companies of veteran soldiers, who were immediately put on shore.

The ships now having the command of the river, intercepted all communication between the different parts of the American camp, and even captured a great number of vessels belonging to the provincials. This unexpected event threw them into the greatest consternation. They precipitately abandoned their quarters, leaving behind them their baggage, their artillery, their munitions, and whatever might have re-



tarded their march: the English seized them immediately.

The sick, attacked for the most part with the small pox, escaped as they could; the Canadians were moved with compassion, and concealed them here and there. Meanwhile the governor had sallied out at the head of the garrison to pursue the Americans. He made no few of them prisoners; but they gave themselves no pause until they had marched full forty-five miles up the St. Lawrence; then, having halted a few hours, they retired to the mouths of the Sorel, where they were joined by four regiments.

They lost, in this place, general Thomas, who died of the small pox: his valour and his integrity rendered him the object of universal consideration. General Sullivan succeeded in command. General Carleton, after such prosperous success, reflecting upon his extreme weakness, ceased to pursue the enemy, and returned to Quebec, intending to wait there for reinforcements, and then take the field with forces sufficient to maintain himself there. But he first gave the most honourable proofs of that humanity which distinguished him. The Americans, whether wounded or sick, were concealed in the forests or in the habitations of the Canadians, where they had to suffer all evils united. The governor issued a proclamation, by which he ordained that men, appointed for this purpose, should go in search of these unfortunate men, to cure them at the public expense, and provide for all their wants. Finally, that they might not fear to discover themselves, he pledged his faith, that so soon as they should have recovered health, he would

leave them at their full and entire liberty to return, without conditions, to their own habitations.

A few days subsequent to the deliverance of Quebec, that is, about the last of the month of May, several regiments of English and Brunswickers arrived in Canada. These re-enforcements carried the British army in that province to upwards of thirteen thousand men, commanded by experienced generals, among whom Carleton was the first in reputation, as in rank. Under his orders were Burgoyne, Phillipps, and Reidesel, a German general of considerable name.

Wishing to profit by the rout of the Americans, they were all of opinion that the war should be carried into the upper parts of Canada, and even further, if fortune should prove propitious. The English general accordingly assembled all his forces at *Trois-Rivieres*, a town situated upon the left bank of the St. Lawrence, at a distance nearly equal from Montreal and from Quebec.

The constancy of the Americans had been put to a severe test under the walls of this capital; they had also to sustain a sanguinary conflict in the environs of Montreal, against a corps of English, of Canadians, and of savages. They occupied a small fort situated in a place called *les Cedres*, a few miles above Montreal.

The royalists appeared before it, and captains Beadle and Butterfield, more careful of their safety than of their honour, and the interests of their country, immediately surrendered upon terms. Some companies had commenced their march from Montreal to bring them succour, but they fell in with a party of the enemy who dispersed them, after an ob-

stinate and bloody resistance. The Indians exercised the most shocking cruelties upon the prisoners. Arnold, who was then at Montreal, unable to endure that the American arms should receive a check from those of the Canadians and savages, immediately took the field in order to avenge this affront. But captain Foster gave him to understand, that if he attacked him and refused to consent to an exchange of prisoners, all the Americans that were found in his power would be massacred immediately by the Indians. Arnold was constrained, though with extreme repugnance, to yield to necessity.

Neither these adverse events, nor the aspect of a position so critical, could shake the courage of the Americans. It was at this very moment that they attempted an operation full of danger and of no little difficulty.

The English troops and those of Brunswick were much dispersed, and very distant from each other. A strong corps was quartered at Trois Rivières, under the command of general Frazer: another, at the orders of general Nesbit, continued on board the transports; and the most considerable corps, forming several divisions, under generals Carleton, Burgoyne, Philipps, and Reidesel, was distributed upon the banks, and upon the river itself, in its lower part, on the side of Quebec. Some other batteaus, full of soldiers, had already passed up the river above Trois Rivières, towards the Sorel. The Americans conceived the project of surprising and cutting off the English division that occupied Trois Rivières, before the others could come to its assistance. General Sullivan accordingly directed general Thompson to embark with two thou-

sand men, upon fifty batteaus that were kept in preparation for the use of the army, and to descend the river. Thompson coasted along the right bank of the lake St. Pierre, formed by the vast breadth of the river in this place, and arrived without being perceived at Nicolete, a town situated upon the same bank of the St. Lawrence, a little above Trois Rivières. His design was to cross the river during the night, to land nine miles above Trois Rivières, and to fall upon the enemy before day. But it had already appeared before the Americans, retarded by many unexpected obstacles, could gain the left bank. They marched, however, with incredible rapidity towards the destined point; but treacherous guides misled them. On having discovered it, they resumed the right road, which was excessively difficult.

Meanwhile the sun was risen, and they were perceived by the troops that were on board the vessels. The alarm was soon given, and general Frazer was promptly apprized of the danger. The Americans, seeing themselves discovered, redoubled their celerity. They arrived at nine in the morning in sight of Trois Rivières; but they found the English drawn up in order of battle, and prepared to receive them. The action was engaged: the Americans, after a feeble struggle, were thrown into disorder; and fled. This notwithstanding, they were rallied; but the day was already lost without remedy. Nesbit landing all at once with his division, took the Americans in rear. From this moment their rout was complete. The soldiers no longer keeping any order, sought their safety in the woods.



Pressed in front by Frazer, who overwhelmed them with a fire of grape-shot, and intercepted by Nesbit, who prevented their return to the batteaus, they suffered horribly in the passage of a marsh. Having at length by incredible efforts succeeded in crossing it, they plunged into thick forests, where the English ceased to pursue them.

When they were able to rejoin their boats, they hastened to return to the mouths of the Sorel. They left many prisoners in the power of the English, among whom general Thompson himself, and colonel Irwin, with many other officers of distinction: they had few killed. The loss of the royal troops was still less. Such was the issue of the expedition of Trois Rivières, conceived with ability, undertaken with intrepidity, but finally directed with imprudence.

The success depending entirely on a surprise by night, it is certain, that when the Americans perceived they could only attack in open day, and still more, that their enemy was on his guard, the part of wisdom would have been to halt, and to recover their first position. Discouraged by this check, and by the consideration of their weakness, the provincials resolved to retreat. The English, on the contrary, animated by victory, determined to use it with all promptitude. Having combined all their divisions at Trois Rivières, they proceeded four days after the action, towards the Sorel, part by the way of the land, and part upon the river. They arrived at the confluence, a few hours after the Americans had destroyed their batteries, and carried away the artillery and munitions.

The English generals then formed two columns, that of the right was to ascend the St. Lawrence and take possession of Montreal, pass the river to Longueville, traverse the country which is comprehended between the St. Lawrence and the Sorel, and re-unite with the column of the left under fort St. John. The column of the left was to ascend the river up to this fort, which it was intended to reduce by assault, or by siege if it was necessary. It was presumable that the Americans would endeavour to make a stand there. The first column soon arrived at Montreal and entered it without obstacle: Arnold had evacuated it, as well as the whole island, the night preceding. Meanwhile Burgoyne advanced by the Sorel with extreme caution; the country being suspicious he feared some ambuscade. The Americans retired with an equal circumspection. They wished to avoid an affair of the rear-guard, and to save their baggage, which, conveyed in batteaus, followed upon the river the progress of the army.

Arnold at length gained fort St. John, without having been attacked, and there effected his junction with Sullivan. But this general, knowing the disadvantage of his position, determined not to risk a siege: he set fire to the magazine and barracks, dismantled the fortifications, and withdrew under the cannon of Crown-Point. Burgoyne could not follow him, all the batteaus having been burnt.

Although this retreat has not been absolutely exempt from confusion, it was not, however, with the exception of the check of Trois Rivières and that of Cedres, attended with any considerable loss either of men, of arms, of munitions, or of baggage.

In the midst of so many dangers, general Sullivan neglected no part of his duty; the Congress addressed him public thanks. The English found themselves compelled to suspend their pursuit.

By falling back upon Crown-Point, the Americans had interposed between themselves and the enemy all the length of Lake Champlain, of which a large number of armed vessels rendered them masters. The English could not hope to proceed further south, by the way of the lake, unless they armed a fleet superior to that of the provincials. It was necessary, besides, that they should construct a great number of batteaus, to serve for the transport of the troops and munitions of a numerous army.

There had arrived from England, it is true, six large armed vessels destined for this use; but the falls of the river Sorel, near Fort Chambly, rendered their entrance into the lake, if not impossible, certainly very difficult. The construction of flat boats presented, also, numerous difficulties, and required a considerable time. Upon these considerations the English renounced all further pursuit, and the Americans had leisure to prepare themselves to resist the future attacks of a powerful and warlike enemy.

The Americans were thus arrested by an insurmountable obstacle in this expedition of Canada, from which they had promised themselves so great advantages. But it should be considered, that either through inexperience, or from the difficulties which are wont to accompany new and tumultuary governments, this enterprise was not commenced until the season was already too far advanced in these cold regions: it was not carried on with sufficient forces;

and the excesses of military licence deprived the colonies of the ancient friendship of the Canadians, which was not only necessary, but even indispensable to the success of their cause. It is certain, however, that if this enterprise had been conducted with a prudence and vigour equal to the boldness which had dictated its plan, or even if destiny had not cut off the days of Montgomery at a moment so critical, the Americans would have gained the object of all their efforts. But fortune does not always favour the brave, nor do the brave always know how to use fortune well.

This expedition of Canada, moreover, led the government or British generals into a signal error with respect to the conduct of all this war; to this cause, especially, must be attributed the inutility of all their efforts against America.

In effect, the invasion of Canada by the Americans was perhaps the first motive which determined the English ministry to assemble so considerable forces in this province, and to divide their army into two distinct parts, one of which was to descend from Canada, by the lakes, into the interior of the colonies, and the other to attack them in front upon the coasts.

It is not improbable, that if instead of these two armies, the English had formed but one only, the war would have had a direction, and perhaps a conclusion, widely different.

The Congress decreed, in honour of a man beloved and revered by the Americans, that there should be procured from Paris a monument, with an appropriate inscription, to transmit to posterity the memory



of the virtues and heroic qualities of Richard Montgomery.

Thus, by the example of those of the dead, they encouraged the virtues of the living. The authors of revolutions too often, of preference, employ bad citizens, either in consequence of their audacity in recommending themselves, or because, having no other principle but their personal interest, they are more pliant and more ductile in the hands of those who govern.

It should be observed, on the contrary, to the glory of the American Congress, that they sought out and distinguished men of worth. We dare not affirm that the number of such, in the times of the revolution, was more considerable in America than in any other country. But it does appear, that if there prevailed among the Americans of this epoch, the vices produced by an immoderate love of gain, those were scarcely remarked which have their origin in luxury, depravity of manners, and the ambition of power. Religion had not yet lost its authority over their minds, nor had it become fashionable with them to offer incense at the altars of vice, or openly to rail at virtue. It is remarkable that the English manifested no less enthusiasm than the Americans for the memory of Montgomery.

Within the parliament itself, there were found orators whose eloquence adjudged him all the praises with which the historians of antiquity have commemorated the most illustrious men of their times. Colonel Barré was particularly remarked for the noble pathos of the regrets he consecrated to the death of his gallant enemy. Burke and Fox endeavoured

to surpass this eulogium in their speeches; Fox, especially, who, as yet very young, already discovered the man he was afterwards to be. Lord North reprehended them sharply, exclaiming that it was indecent to lavish so many praises upon a rebel. He admitted that Montgomery was brave, able, humane, and generous; but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel: he cited this verse of Addison in Cato,—“Curse on his virtues, they’ve undone his country.”—Fox answered him immediately, with warmth, that “the term ‘rebel,’ applied to that excellent person, was no certain mark of disgrace, and therefore he was the less earnest to clear him of the imputation; for that all the great assertors of liberty, the saviours of their country, the benefactors of mankind, in all ages, had been called rebels; that they even owed the constitution, which enabled them to sit in that house, to a rebellion.” He added this passage from the prince of Latin poets—

*Sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi,*

*Sunt lachrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.*

But it is time to resume the thread of the history. The Americans found a compensation for the disasters of Canada, in the success they obtained under the walls of Charleston, in South Carolina. The ministers had resolved to aim a vigorous blow at the southern provinces, because they had persuaded themselves, and not without reason, that the friends of England were more numerous there than in those of the north. They had no doubt that they would all show themselves so soon as the troops of the king should appear in force upon the coasts, or should have

become possessed of some important post. They hoped with the succour of the loyalists to re-establish the ancient order of things in these provinces, and they calculated that thence they might afterwards attack in flank those of the middle and north; which, being pressed in the rear, on the part of Canada, by a strong army, and in front on the part of the sea, by forces no less formidable, would thus be deprived of all power of resistance. The ministers already saw America returned to its ancient submission. They determined to turn their arms at first against North Carolina, as the weakest part, and to add to this conquest that of South Carolina and of Virginia, according to the success of operations.

For this reason the fleet, having on board the troops destined for this expedition, had sailed from the ports of England and Ireland before the others. General Clinton, who, at the head of another considerable corps, was to come from New York to join the new re-enforcements, was already arrived at Cape Fear, not having been able to execute his design of attacking Virginia. But, on the one hand, the impatience of the loyalists of North Carolina had caused the miscarriage of the expedition, and their own ruin; on the other, contrary winds and storms had so retarded beyond all expectation the passage of the fleet which, under the command of admiral Peter Parker, was bound for Cape Fear, that it could not reach that point until long after the calculated term, nor until the loyalists were already put down, and the inhabitants of the two Carolinas were not only apprized of the menaced attack, but had even already made all their preparations for resistance. It is certain that if

the loyalists of North Carolina had delayed for some time longer to declare themselves; or if the sea had been more propitious to the English, the affairs of Congress might have taken a disastrous direction in the south. The squadron of admiral Parker arrived at Cape Fear about the beginning of May, with many land troops, and with generals Cornwallis, Vaughan, and several others. Here they made their junction with general Clinton, who, from seniority, took the command in chief.

The obstinate resistance of the Virginians, and the disasters of the partisans of England in North Carolina, precluded all hope of success in these two provinces; there remained therefore no other advisable procedure but that of turning against South Carolina; which expedition offered also this advantage, that the reduction of Charleston secured the conquest of the entire province.

Its inhabitants, struck with consternation at the loss of their capital, would never even think of attempting to defend an open country, exposed to the inroads of an active and disciplined enemy. Nor could the taking of Charleston be considered a difficult operation, this city being situated upon the very coast.

The plan being decided, the English prepared themselves for the execution. But the Carolinians had neglected nothing to secure themselves the means of defending their province, and particularly their capital. The chiefs of the people, as we have already related, had taken particular care to fortify Sullivan's Island, situated on the part of the sea, at the distance of six miles from the point of land formed by the confluence of the two rivers, Ashley and Cooper, and up-



on which the city of Charleston is built. This island so commands the channel which leads to the port, that the vessels which would enter it must pass under the cannon of fort Moultrie. It had recently been armed with thirty-six pieces of heavy cannon, and twenty-six of inferior caliber. The fort itself was constructed of a species of wood of the country, which the inhabitants denominate Palmetto, and is so spongy and soft, that the ball is deprived by it of its impetus, and lodges within it without causing splinters. The militia of all the province were called in haste to the defence of the city. In the space of a few days the garrison amounted to six thousand men, if not perfectly disciplined, at least full of ardour.

The regiment on pay, of South Carolina, was sent to guard fort Johnson, situated in James-Island, three miles from Charleston, and which commanded the whole breadth of the channel.

The second and third regiments occupied Sullivan's Island. William Moultrie, who commanded the second regiment, was charged with the defence of the fort, which afterwards, from his gallant defence of it, was called by his name. The rest of the troops were distributed in the most important posts; the roads which led to the sea were obstructed by abattis, the warehouses of the coast demolished, and intrenchments erected upon the shore.

There was not an inhabitant who had not in hand either arms or the spade, or the pickaxe. The blacks, who had been called in from the country, admirably seconded the whites in all the labours of fortification. The chief command belonged to general Lee, who possessed the entire confidence of the troops and of

the people; none rivalled him in devotion to the common cause. The hatred he had long borne towards the English government, the love of glory, and the desire of answering the universal expectation, continually excited his natural ardour. Rutledge, a man of great influence in the province, also manifested the most active zeal in animating the inhabitants to defend themselves. His example and his exhortations obtained the most happy results. Every one was at his post, expecting the enemy with intrepid confidence. Meanwhile the British fleet appeared, and cast anchor to the north of Sullivan's Island.

The ships of war were the *Bristol* and *Experiment* of fifty guns; four frigates, the *Active*, the *Acteon*, the *Solebay*, and the *Syren* of twenty-eight; the *Sphynx* of twenty, the *Friendship* of twenty-two, two smaller vessels of eight, and the *Thunder*, a bomb-ketch.

It was very difficult, especially for the large ships, to pass the bar which is found at the entrance of the channel of Charleston.

It was not without extreme fatigue that the English succeeded in crossing it with the *Bristol* and *Experiment*, even after they had lightened them of their artillery and a great part of their lading. They struck, and it was thought they would bilge immediately; but the skill of the officers and the efforts of the sailors at length preserved them. The intention of the English was to reduce Fort Moultrie, in order, afterwards, to attack the city without obstacle. General Clinton issued a proclamation, which he sent into the city by a flag; he therein reminded the inhabitants of the subversion of all laws, of the tyranny established in the hands of the Congress, the committees, and other un-

constitutional authorities; he gave them a last admonition, before proceeding to extremities; he exhorted them to avert from their heads, by a prompt return to obedience, the vengeance of a powerful and irritated nation. He offered pardon, at the same time, to all those who should lay down arms and submit immediately.

This summons produced no effect whatever.

The English generals had arranged their attack in the following manner:—The ships were to cannonade Fort Moultrie in front, while a corps of troops landed for this purpose in Long Island, to the east of Sullivan's Island, should cross the narrow arm of the sea that separates them, and which was believed fordable. This corps would then have pressed the fort on the part of the land, which was much less strongly fortified. This plan offered them so fair a prospect of success, that general Lee himself, having doubts whether the fort could be defended, recommended that it should be evacuated, and that all efforts should be concentrated for the defence of the city. But the inhabitants, who dreaded bombs out of measure, resolved to attempt, by all means, the defence of the fort.

All the preparations being completed on the one part, and on the other, on the morning of the twenty-eighth of June, the ketch *Thunder*, protected by another armed vessel, took post and began to throw bombs into Fort Moultrie, while the rest of the squadron advanced.

About eleven o'clock, the *Bristol*, the *Experiment*, the *Active*, and the *Solebay*, having formed in line, opened a violent fire against the fort. The *Sphynx*,

the *Acteon*, and the *Syren*, went to take their station to the west, between the point of Sullivan's Island and the city, partly to be able to sweep the interior of the works, and partly to intercept all communication between the island and the main land, which would deprive the garrison of the means of retreat, prevent them from receiving succours of men and of munitions, and prohibit the Carolinians from annoying the besiegers by fire ships or other engines of war. The unskilfulness of the pilots caused the miscarriage of these dispositions; the three vessels struck upon a bank named the Middle Grounds, two of them, by the exertions of the mariners, were again set afloat, but not without having received considerable damage. Whether on account of the hour already become late, or in consequence of this damage, they were no longer in a situation to execute the orders of the captains. As to the *Acteon*, she was totally stranded, and, the next morning, burned. During this time the four first vessels had kept up a furious cannonade against the fort, which was returned with equal vivacity. The *Thunder*, after having discharged upwards of sixty bombs, found herself so disabled, that she discontinued her fire; but the others maintained it; and if the attack was vigorous, the defence was not feeble. The English themselves were constrained to admire the intrepidity of the Americans in so hot an action.

The garrison of the fort, which consisted only in militia and a few soldiers of the line, displayed an incredible coolness and gallantry, in the service of their artillery, in the midst of the tempest of balls which was hailed upon them by the enemy's squadron. The



Americans aimed with an extreme precision. The English ships suffered excessively; and their loss in men was not inconsiderable. The Bristol especially, being damaged in all her rigging, was for some time so exposed to the fire of the batteries, that she narrowly escaped being sunk. Captain Morris, who commanded the *Acteon*, had already received several wounds, and the greater part of his men were killed: left almost alone upon the deck, he refused to be carried below, until a ball took off one of his legs, and then was removed without hope of life. The admiral himself, Peter Parker, received a severe contusion.

Lord Campbell, who a little before was governor of the province, was mortally wounded.

The loss of the garrison was very inconsiderable; nevertheless their fire slackened, and at length ceased altogether. Their ammunition was exhausted, and the English considered their victory as already secure. But the Americans soon succoured the fort, and the cannonade was renewed with the same fury as at first. It continued till seven o'clock in the evening.

The English then perceiving the inutility of their attack, and the deplorable state of their vessels, and not seeing the corps make its appearance which was to have come up on the part of Long Island, determined to abandon the enterprise.

Generals Clinton and Cornwallis would have crossed the arm of the sea which separates the two neighbouring islands, in order to attack Fort Moultrie on the land side, as it had been concerted, but the water was found too deep, and the ford impracticable; this,

at least, they alleged. On the other hand, even though they should have succeeded in surmounting these obstacles, it is probable they would have found others more formidable still upon the shores of Sullivan's Island. Colonel Thompson, at the head of three hundred grenadiers of his regiment; colonel Clark, with two hundred soldiers of North Carolina; colonel Horry, followed by two hundred militiamen of South Carolina, and Racoon's company of riflemen, with some pieces of artillery, had occupied the posts situated at the eastern extremity of the island. It is, therefore, credible, that it was more the preparations of defence made by the Americans, than the difficulty of the ford which prevented the English generals from attempting the passage. Can it be supposed that officers, so experienced, should have continued nine whole days in Long Island without having caused the depth of the waters to be sounded, and ascertaining, long before the time of the action, whether they were fordable or not?

It appears equally difficult to comprehend how, after having discovered either that the ford was impracticable, or the position of the Americans impregnable, the English should have remained inactive in Long Island, instead of endeavouring to land upon some other part of Sullivan's Island by means of the boats they had assembled. This circumstance presents several points which it is impossible to explain. However it may be, the English retired during the night, and the following morning their ships were already at the distance of two miles from the island. A few days after, having re-embarked their troops, they made sail for New-York, where the army, increased

by all the re-enforcements it had received from England, expected general Howe.

Such was the issue of the attack of Fort Moultrie by the English. It placed the affairs of South Carolina, for the present, in a state of security. The fort itself received little injury, either because the balls of the enemy passed above it, or because the spongy wood, of which it was constructed, diminished their effect.

This battle was remarkable on the side of the Americans for some of those traits of obstinate courage which are the usual result of the fermentation of minds in the midst of political revolutions. Among others, it is recorded, that a sergeant of grenadiers, named Jasper, on seeing the staff of the American standard cut by a ball, sprung after it to the ground, and fastened it to the rammer of a cannon; then mounting upon the parapet, hoisted it anew in the midst of the most violent fire of the enemy. President Rutledge presented him with a sword, complimenting him highly and publicly.

Sergeant Macdonald, mortally wounded, and upon the point of expiring, continued to encourage his soldiers in the defence of country and of liberty. These examples of intrepidity were the object of great encomium in all the journals, and in all assemblies, both public and private.

These happy successes inflamed the minds of the Americans with new ardour. The event having demonstrated of what importance was Fort Moultrie, and on the other hand, how difficult it was to throw succours into it by way of the sea, it was resolved to unite Sullivan's Island to the continent by a bridge.

This important work, notwithstanding all the obstacles it presented, was executed by general Gadsden, a zealous patriot, and one of the most distinguished men of the province. The Congress, by a special decree, voted their thanks to major-general Lee, to colonel Moultrie, to colonel Thompson, and to all the officers and soldiers who had displayed equal courage and patriotism in this memorable defence.

At this epoch, America was found in a strange situation, and actually unheard of till then. The war she had carried on with so much vigour, now, for more than a year, was directed against a king to whom she incessantly renewed her protestations of obedience; and the same men, who committed all the acts of rebellion, would by no means be called rebels. In all the tribunals, justice was still administered in the name of the king; and in the churches, prayers were continually repeated for the preservation and happiness of that prince, whose authority was not only entirely rejected, but also fought against with incredible obstinacy. It was declared to be the general wish to resume the ancient connexion, to re-establish the original form of the royal government, whereas, in reality, the republican system had been long since introduced. A desire was pretended to arrive at one object, while all those means were resorted to which led to another absolutely opposite; in effect, in no revolution of state has there ever been observed so much incongruity between words and actions.

Such a state of things could not have duration: if the vulgar persuaded themselves that force of arms would reduce the government to bend before their



will, enlightened citizens perceived, distinctly, that the wound was become incurable; and that it was hoped, in vain, to see the restoration of ancient ties between the colonies and the parent state. They well knew that the obstinacy of the British government was the fruit of pride, and that whatever success the Americans might obtain in the course of the war, they could never be of such a nature as to alarm this government for its own existence; the only extremity, however, that would be capable of inducing it to listen to a negotiation of accord.

The Americans could wage only a defensive war; and even supposing they should vanquish the armies of Great Britain, she would always be able to renew the conflict. On the other hand, the mere loss of commerce with America, would not suffice to determine the government to accede to the conditions of the colonists, since all the other parts of the globe were open to it. Besides, great naval forces being the surest guarantee of the safety of commerce, that nation, whose marine shall have acquired an acknowledged superiority, will see its commerce increase and flourish under the protection of its flag. Nor should it be omitted, that however the principle of the quarrel seemed to consist in a struggle between limited monarchy and absolute monarchy, it now existed, in fact, only between the monarchy and the republic. The Americans, therefore, could have no other prospect but of entire liberty and independence; or of total dependence and servitude.

In this state of things, there was not a man endowed with penetration and experience, who did not perceive that an open and solemn declaration of the

object it was desired to attain, was the wisest, and even the only resolution the Americans could adopt. Their situation was not rendered by it more critical; it even offered immediate advantages, and still greater in perspective. Their counsels would thus acquire more firmness, a point essential to the success of such an enterprise, and foreign succours would become more easily attainable. It might then be believed that the colonists, after having solemnly proclaimed their independence, would combat to the last in its defence.

The apprehension of a sudden reconciliation no longer restraining foreign powers, they might openly succour them. And perhaps the pride of England would be less hurt, in case of reverse, at negotiating with the Americans as with an independent nation, than in submitting to the conditions which had been the first occasion of the quarrel: for war can have no result more bitter than that of compelling him that has waged it to give up to his enemy the very object in dispute. The course, therefore, which the Americans had to pursue, was no longer doubtful, and the Congress was not slow to perceive it. If the resolution was urgent, it could never be taken in circumstances more propitious, or under auspices more favourable. The success of the arms of the patriots in Massachusetts, Virginia and South Carolina, provinces of such chief importance; the prosperity of their first maritime enterprises; and the multitude of prizes taken from the enemy by their privateers, inspired a well grounded hope, that whatever should be decreed by the Congress would have the concurrence of all America. The terror of the English arms had diminished in the

minds of all, in proportion to the increase of confidence in the national forces; the union of the different provinces became more intimate; the ill success of the loyalists, in their first attempts, had discouraged them, and caused them to be looked upon by the patriots as enemies little to be feared. But if this party was impotent in arms, they neglected not to resort to plots, the immediate effect of which was to redouble the animosity of the patriots against a government, that not content, as they said, with employing force, also hired incendiaries and assassins to practice their horrible arts against innocent cities, and the most virtuous citizens.

Certain loyalists of New-York, gained and instigated, as it was rumoured, by governor Tryon, had formed a conspiracy, the object of which was to arrest, and perhaps to murder, general Washington and the other principal officers; to set fire to the magazines, and to occupy all the avenues of the city at the moment when the British troops, that were expected, should have presented themselves before it. The plot having been discovered, many individuals, who had been concerned in it, were seized, among others, two of the general's guards, and his steward himself: some were executed.

The horrible project of setting fire to so considerable a city, and attempting the life of a man to whom the people bore so much reverence and love, transported the patriots with indignation. They demanded, with loud cries, to be liberated forever from the power of a government which, according to the general opinion, gave wages to such infamous assassins.

England herself, by her public acts, precipitated the moment of this total separation.

The discourse held by the king to the parliament had persuaded the Americans that nothing would be remitted of the measures of rigour adopted against them, and consequently that their preparations of war could not be too formidable.

The discussions and decisions of parliament, disclosed to them the impotence of those who attempted to defend their cause. But the act of the fifteenth of May, which abandoned American property, private as well as public, to those who could find the way to seize it, had thoroughly apprized the colonists that it was resolved not only to exercise against them the extremes of hostility, but that it was intended to violate, with respect to them, all the principles of those laws which, among civilized nations, still plead for humanity even in the midst of carnage and devastations. In a word, they no longer doubted but that the English ministry was determined to organize against them a system of piracy and robbery. No foreign nation, when their enemy, had ever perpetrated such excesses; much less could they endure them on the part of their own fellow citizens. But was it possible still to give this name to enemies who no longer observed any measure? Affection, which has its source in the ties of blood and political union, can no longer exist, when not only the laws in use among friendly nations, but even usages respected by civilized people in the midst of the most cruel discords, have been trampled under foot. And if the English resolved to wage a war of barbarians against America,



the least that could follow was, that the latter should view them as foreigners.

The resolution taken by England to employ, and send against the Americans, the mercenary troops of Germany, whom the colonists looked upon as men devoid of all humanity, had produced the most violent impression upon their minds. From this moment they abjured all sentiment of consanguinity towards a people who sent against their children such cruel executors of their will. "Behold then, they cried, the ministers of peace, the negotiators that England sends us! The soldiers of the princes of Hesse, of Brunswick, and of Waldeck! The devastations, the massacres, the implacable fury of these hireling Germans, the horrible barbarities of the Indian savages, such are the instruments the British government employs to vanquish our constancy, and subject us anew to its yoke! The English arm foreigners against us; then let us combat the English themselves, as if they were foreigners. Their laws, no less cruel than their soldiers, have severed all our ties; have despoiled us even of the hope to re-unite them: wherefore, then, do we still hesitate to adopt a resolution, which if at first it appeared to us painful and prejudicial, every thing now demonstrates to be useful and even necessary?"

It is certain, that the very measures from which the ministers expected the return of the Americans to submission, served but to redouble their obstinacy, and furnished new arms to the Congress, and to all the partisans of independence.

Even the greater part of those who had professed contrary opinions, were seen to join with them, or at

least to manifest an extreme indifference for the interests of England. Her enemies increased every day in number and hardness; and every day her friends lost their influence and their zeal. A memorable example for those who, in their blind precipitation, imagine that measures proper to divide men, and to arm them against one another when they are cool, will produce the same effect when they are animated by some violent passion! Then what should appease, irritates; what should intimidate, encourages; and what should divide, assembles and unites. The desire of independence insinuated itself little by little into the minds of all. In public, particularly, the harangues had no other object: the general attention was fixed upon events. At this epoch appeared a writing entitled *Common Sense*: it was the production of Thomas Paine, born in England, and arrived not long before in America. No writer, perhaps, ever possessed, in a higher degree, the art of moving and guiding the multitude at his will. It may be affirmed, in effect, that this work was one of the most powerful instruments of American independence.

The author endeavoured, with very plausible arguments, to demonstrate that the opposition of parties, the diversity of interests, the arrogance of the British government, and its ardent thirst of vengeance, rendered all reconciliation impossible. On the other hand, he enlarged upon the necessity, utility, and possibility of independence.

He omitted not to sprinkle his pamphlet with declamations calculated to render monarchy odious to the people, and to inspire them with the desire of a republic. The excellency of the English constitu-

tion had never till then been called in question: Paine criticised it very freely in the part which relates to the royal power; but praised its other institutions. He painted all the calamities which had weighed upon England, notwithstanding the much extolled goodness of its constitution, especially since the re-establishment of monarchy; thence he inferred that it contained some essential vice which opposed the happiness of the people; and this lurking defect he affirmed was royalty.

To this he attributed intestine discords, and the frequency of foreign wars: he congratulated the Americans that heaven had placed it in their power to create a constitution that should embrace all the excellencies of that of England without any of its defects; and thus, again, he intimated the exclusion of royalty. The success of this writing of Paine cannot be described.

The vehemence of opinions redoubled in the minds of all; even loyalists were seen to declare for liberty; an unanimous cry arose for independence.

The Congress determined to seize the opportunity. But to proceed with prudence, they wished first to sound the minds of the people by passing a resolution, which, if it was not independence itself, evidently led to it. They intended to observe its effects, in order to govern their subsequent conduct accordingly. They decreed, that whereas the British king, in conjunction with the lords and commons of Great Britain, had, by the late acts of parliament, excluded the united colonies from the protection of his crown: and whereas no answer had been, or probably would be, given to their humble petitions for the repeal of the obnoxious laws, and for a reconciliation with Great

Britain; that, on the contrary, all the force of that realm, with the aid of mercenary foreigners, was to be employed for the destruction of the good people of the colonies: and finally, whereas it is contrary to sound reason, and to the consciences of this people, to take the oaths and make the engagements necessary to the assumption and exercise of offices under the crown of Great Britain; and it is necessary that the exercise of every authority, proceeding from the said crown, should be totally annulled, and all the powers of government exercised under the authority of the good people of the colonies; and this in order to maintain internal peace, good morals, and public order, as well as to defend their lives, liberty, and property, from the assaults and cruel rapine of their enemies: therefore it was recommended to the respective assemblies and conventions of the united colonies, where no government suited to the exigency of affairs had till then been constituted, that they should establish such governments, as according to the opinion of the representatives of the people, should be most conducive to the happiness and security of their constituents, and of America in general. This resolution of Congress being rapidly notified to all the colonies, encountered among them, respectively, a different reception. Some had already anticipated it, and assuming the powers of government had created institutions independent of the crown, and these no longer temporary, as at first, but stable, and subject to no limitation of time or of condition. Thus Virginia and South Carolina had proceeded. Connecticut and Rhode Island needed no change; since there, from the earliest times, every authority originated in the people, by whom all pub-



lic officers were chosen, as well those to whom were entrusted the legislative, as those who exercised the executive powers. Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York, hesitated; but at length yielded to the necessity of the times. Thus the people of the colonies set about framing new constitutions; but with the exception of the parts which relate to regal authority, all preserved those forms which are peculiar and appropriate to the English constitution.

The three powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, were carefully separated from each other; and great jealousy was manifested of the executive.

In some colonies, the legislature was divided into two branches; in others, it formed but one corps; but in all, those who held offices of trust or power under the executive were excluded. The judges were paid either by the legislature or by the executive. In some their tenure of office was for a limited period, in others during good behaviour. The governors were elected for a longer or shorter term of time, according to the greater or less jealousy of the people. In some colonies they possessed the right of *veto*; in others not. Here the governor was made responsible for all his acts, there for none, because he was subject to the decisions of an executive council. In all these deliberations, so important to the happiness of the united colonies, no threats, discord, or reproaches, were heard; and it appeared as if all, laying aside ambition, aspired to nothing but the prosperity and liberty of their country. A memorable example of prudence, moderation, and concord! Let other nations reflect on this and blush, for having acted in all times so differently from the Americans; if, indeed, corruption of

morals has left still the power of blushing to those who rush from conflicts of opinion to discord, and from discord to the effusion of blood.

The Congress had found all minds disposed to adopt the resolution they meditated; but to accomplish the work they had commenced, it was requisite that they should be formally authorized by the colonies to proclaim independence.

This great business was conducted with so much prudence, and the people were so much inclined to favour the design, that the greater part of the provincial assemblies invested their representatives in Congress with full powers to carry it into effect. Some also authorized them to conclude alliances with foreign princes. Pennsylvania and Maryland alone remained in opposition.

Such was the state of things, when in the sitting of Congress of the eighth of June, a motion having been made to declare independence, Richard Henry Lee, one of the deputies from Virginia, spoke as follows, and was heard with profound attention:

“ I know not, whether among all the civil discords which have been recorded by historians, and which have been excited either by the love of liberty in the people, or by the ambition of princes, there has ever been presented a deliberation more interesting or more important than that which now engages our attention; whether we consider the future destiny of this free and virtuous people, or that of our enemies themselves, who, notwithstanding their tyranny and this cruel war, are still our brethren, and descended from a common stock; or finally, that of the other nations of the globe, whose eyes are intent upon this great

spectacle, and who anticipate from our success more freedom for themselves, or from our defeat apprehend heavier chains and a severer bondage. For the question is not whether we shall acquire an increase of territorial dominion, or wickedly wrest from others their just possessions; but whether we shall preserve, or lose forever, that liberty which we have inherited from our ancestors, which we have pursued across tempestuous seas, and which we have defended in this land against barbarous men, ferocious beasts, and an inclement sky. And if so many and distinguished praises have always been lavished upon the generous defenders of Greek and of Roman liberty, what will be said of us who defend a liberty which is founded not upon the capricious will of an unstable multitude, but upon immutable statutes and tutelary laws; not that which was the exclusive privilege of a few patricians, but that which is the property of all; not that which was stained by iniquitous ostracisms, or the horrible decimation of armies, but that which is pure, temperate, and gentle, and conformed to the civilization of the present age. Why then do we longer procrastinate, and wherefore are these delays? Let us complete the enterprise already so well commenced; and since our union with England can no longer consist with that liberty and peace which are our chief delight, let us dissolve these fatal ties, and conquer forever that good which we already enjoy; an entire and absolute independence.

“ But ought I not to begin by observing, that if we have reached that violent extremity, beyond which nothing can any longer exist between America and England, but either such war or such peace as are

made between foreign nations, this can only be imputed to the insatiable cupidity, the tyrannical proceedings, and the outrages, for ten years reiterated, of the British ministers. What have we not done to restore peace, to re-establish harmony? Who has not heard our prayers, and who is ignorant of our supplications? They have wearied the universe. England alone was deaf to our complaints, and wanted that compassion towards us which we have found among all other nations. And as at first our forbearance, and then our resistance, have proved equally insufficient; since our prayers were unavailing, as well as the blood lately shed; we must go further, and proclaim our independence. Nor let any one believe that we have any other option left. The time will certainly come when the fated separation must take place, whether you will or no; for so it is decreed by the very nature of things, the progressive increase of our population, the fertility of our soil, the extent of our territory, the industry of our countrymen, and the immensity of the ocean which separates the two states. And if this be true, as it is most true, who does not see that the sooner it takes place the better; and that it would be not only imprudent, but the height of folly, not to seize the present occasion, when British injustice has filled all hearts with indignation, inspired all minds with courage, united all opinions in one, and put arms in every hand? And how long must we traverse three thousand miles of a stormy sea, to go and solicit of arrogant and insolent men either counsels or commands to regulate our domestic affairs? Does it not become a great, rich, and powerful nation, as we are, to look at home, and not abroad, for the



government of its own concerns? And how can a ministry of strangers judge, with any discernment, of our interests, when they know not, and when it little imports them to know, what is good for us, and what is not? The past justice of the British ministers should warn us against the future, if they should ever seize us again in their cruel claws. Since it has pleased our barbarous enemies to place before us the alternative of slavery or of independence, where is the generous minded man and the lover of his country who can hesitate to choose? With these perfidious men no promise is secure, no pledges sacred. Let us suppose, which heaven avert, that we are conquered; let us suppose an accommodation. What assurance have we of the British moderation in victory, or good faith in treaty? Is it their having enlisted and let loose against us the ferocious Indians, and the merciless soldiers of Germany? Is it that faith, so often pledged and so often violated in the course of the present contest; this British faith, which is reputed more false than Punic? We ought rather to expect, that when we shall have fallen naked and unarmed into their hands, they will wreak upon us their fury and their vengeance; they will load us with heavier chains, in order to deprive us not only of the power, but even of the hope of again recovering our liberty. But I am willing to admit, although it is a thing without example, that the British government will forget past offences and perform its promises, can we imagine, that after so long dissensions, after so many outrages, so many combats, and so much bloodshed, our reconciliation could be durable, and that every day, in the midst of so much hatred and rancour, would not af-

ford some fresh subject of animosity? The two nations are already separated in interest and affections; the one is conscious of its ancient strength, the other has become acquainted with its newly exerted force; the one desires to rule in an arbitrary manner, the other will not obey even if allowed its privileges. In such a state of things, what peace, what concord, can be expected. The Americans may become faithful friends to the English, but subjects, never. And even though union could be restored without rancour, it could not without danger. The wealth and power of Great Britain should inspire prudent men with fears for the future. Having reached such a height of grandeur that she has no longer any thing to dread from foreign powers, in the security of peace the spirit of her people will decay, manners will be corrupted, her youth will grow up in the midst of vice, and in this state of degeneration, England will become the prey of a foreign enemy, or an ambitious citizen. If we remain united with her, we shall partake of her corruptions and misfortunes, the more to be dreaded as they will be irreparable; separated from her, on the contrary, as we are, we should neither have to fear the seductions of peace nor the dangers of war. By a declaration of our freedom, the perils would not be increased; but we should add to the ardour of our defenders, and to the splendour of victory. Let us then take a firm step and escape from this labyrinth; we have assumed the sovereign power, and dare not confess it; we disobey a king, and acknowledge ourselves his subjects; wage war against a people, on whom we incessantly protest our desire to depend. What is the consequence of so many inconsistencies?

Hesitation paralyzes all our measures; the way we ought to pursue is not marked out; our generals are neither respected nor obeyed; our soldiers have neither confidence nor zeal; feeble at home, and little considered abroad, foreign princes can neither esteem nor succour so timid and wavering a people. But independence once proclaimed, and our object avowed, more manly and decided measures will be adopted; all minds will be fired by the greatness of the enterprise, the civil magistrates will be inspired with new zeal, the generals with fresh ardour, and the citizens with greater constancy, to attain so high and so glorious a destiny. There are some who seem to dread the effects of this resolution. But will England, or can she, manifest against us greater vigour and rage than she has already displayed? She deems resistance against oppression no less rebellion than independence itself. And where are those formidable troops that are to subdue the Americans? What the English could not do, can it be done by Germans? Are they more brave or better disciplined? The number of our enemies is increased; but our own is not diminished, and the battles we have sustained have given us the practice of arms and the experience of war. Who doubts then that a declaration of independence will procure us allies? All nations are desirous of procuring, by commerce, the productions of our exuberant soil; they will visit our ports hitherto closed by the monopoly of insatiable England. They are no less eager to contemplate the reduction of her hated power; they all loathe her barbarous dominion; their succours will evince to our brave countrymen the gratitude they bear them for having been the first

to shake the foundations of this Còlossus. Foreign princes wait only for the extinction of all hazard of reconciliation to throw off their present reserve. If this measure is useful, it is no less becoming our dignity. America has arrived at a degree of power which assigns her a place among independent nations; we are not less entitled to it than the English themselves. If they have wealth, so also have we; if they are brave, so are we; if they are more numerous, our population, through the incredible fruitfulness of our chaste wives, will soon equal theirs; if they have men of renown as well in peace as in war, we likewise have such; political revolutions usually produce great, brave, and generous spirits. From what we have already achieved in these painful beginnings, it is easy to presume what we shall hereafter accomplish; for experience is the source of sage counsels, and liberty is the mother of great men. Have you not seen the enemy driven from Lexington by thirty thousand citizens armed and assembled in one day? Already their most celebrated generals have yielded in Boston to the skill of ours; already their seamen repulsed from our coasts, wander over the ocean, where they are the sport of tempest, and the prey of famine. Let us hail the favourable omen, and fight not for the sake of knowing on what terms we are to be the slaves of England, but to secure to ourselves a free existence, to found a just and independent government. Animated by liberty, the Greeks repulsed the innumerable army of Persians; sustained by the love of independence, the Swiss and the Dutch humbled the power of Austria by memorable defeats, and conquered a rank among nations. But the sun of America also shines upon the heads of



the brave; the point of our weapons is no less formidable than theirs; here also the same union prevails, the same contempt of dangers and of death in asserting the cause of country.

“ Why then do we longer delay, why still deliberate? Let this most happy day give birth to the American republic. Let her arise, not to devastate and conquer, but to re-establish the reign of peace and of the laws. The eyes of Europe are fixed upon us; she demands of us a living example of freedom, that may contrast, by the felicity of the citizens, with the ever increasing tyranny which desolates her polluted shores. She invites us to prepare an asylum where the unhappy may find solace, and the persecuted repose. She intreats us to cultivate a propitious soil, where that generous plant which first sprung up and grew in England, but is now withered by the poisonous blasts of Scottish tyranny, may revive and flourish, sheltering under its salubrious and interminable shade all the unfortunate of the human race. This is the end presaged by so many omens, by our first victories, by the present ardour and union, by the flight of Howe, and the pestilence which broke out amongst Dunmore’s people, by the very winds which baffled the enemy’s fleets and transports, and that terrible tempest which engulfed seven hundred vessels upon the coasts of Newfoundland. If we are not this day wanting in our duty to country, the names of the American legislators will be placed, by posterity, at the side of those of Theseus, of Lycurgus, of Romulus, of Numa, of the three Williams of Nassau, and of all those whose memory has been, and will be, forever dear to virtuous men and good citizens.”

Lee had scarcely ceased speaking, when no dubious signs of approbation were manifested on all parts. But the deputies of Pennsylvania and Maryland not being present, and the Congress desirous, by some delay, to evidence the maturity of their deliberations, adjourned the further consideration of the subject to the first of July. Meanwhile the patriots laboured strenuously to induce the two dissenting provinces also to decide for independence. They employed the most earnest persuasions, to which they added also threats, intimating that not only would the other colonies exclude them from the confederation, but that they would immediately treat them as enemies. The provincial assembly of Pennsylvania remained inflexible. At length, the inhabitants of Pennsylvania formed a convention, in which the debates and disputes upon the question of independence were many and vehement.

John Dickinson, one of the deputies of the province to the general Congress, a man of prompt genius, of extensive influence, and one of the most zealous partisans of American liberty, restricted however to the condition of union with England, harangued, it is said, in the following manner against independence.

“It too often happens, fellow citizens, that men, heated by the spirit of party, give more importance in their discourses to the surface and appearance of objects, than either to reason or justice; thus evincing that their aim is not to appease tumults, but to excite them; not to repress the passions, but to inflame them; not to compose ferocious discords, but to exasperate and imbitter them more and more. They aspire but to please the powerful, to gratify their own ambition, to

flatter the caprices of the multitude, in order to captivate their favour. Accordingly, in popular commotions, the party of wisdom and of equity is commonly found in the minority; and perhaps it would be safer, in difficult circumstances, to consult the smaller instead of the greater number. Upon this principle I invite the attention of those who hear me, since my opinion may differ from that of the majority; but I dare believe it will be shared by all impartial and moderate citizens, who condemn this tumultuous proceeding, this attempt to coerce our opinions, and to drag us with so much precipitation to the most serious and important of decisions. But coming to the subject in controversy, I affirm, that prudent men do not abandon objects which are certain, to go in pursuit of those which offer only uncertainty. Now it is an established fact, that America can be well and happily governed by the English laws, under the same king, and the same parliament. Two hundred years of happiness furnish the proof of it; and we find it also in the present prosperity which is the result of these venerable laws and of this ancient union. It is not as independent, but as subjects; not as republic, but as monarchy; that we have arrived at this degree of power and of greatness.

“What then is the object of these chimeras hatched in the days of discord and of war? Shall the transports of fury have more power over us than the experience of ages? Shall we destroy, in a moment of anger, the work cemented and tested by time?

“I know the name of liberty is dear to each one of us; but have we not enjoyed liberty even under the English monarchy? Shall we this day renounce that, to go and seek it in I know not what form of republic,

which will soon change into a licentious anarchy and popular tyranny? In the human body the head only sustains and governs all the members, directing them, with admirable harmony, to the same object, which is self-preservation and happiness; so the head of the body politic, that is the king in concert with the parliament, can alone maintain the union of the members of this empire, lately so flourishing, and prevent civil war by obviating all the evils produced by variety of opinions and diversity of interests. And so firm is my persuasion of this, that I fully believe the most cruel war which Great Britain could make upon us, would be that of not making any; and that the surest means of bringing us back to her obedience, would be that of employing none. For the dread of the English arms once removed, provinces would rise up against provinces, and cities against cities; and we should be seen to turn against ourselves the arms we have taken up to combat the common enemy.

“Insurmountable necessity would then compel us to resort to the tutelary authority which we should have rashly abjured, and if it consented to receive us again under its Egis, it would be no longer as free citizens, but as slaves. Still inexperienced, and in our infancy, what proof have we given of our ability to walk without a guide? none: and if we judge of the future by the past, we must conclude that our concord will continue as long as the danger, and no longer.

“Even when the powerful hand of England supported us, for the paltry motives of territorial limits and distant jurisdictions, have we not abandoned ourselves to discords, and sometimes even to violence?



And what must we not expect now that minds are heated, ambitions roused, and arms in the hands of all?

“If, therefore, our union with England offers us so many advantages for the maintenance of internal peace, it is no less necessary to procure us with foreign powers that condescension and respect which is so essential to the prosperity of our commerce, to the enjoyment of any consideration, and to the accomplishment of any enterprise. Hitherto in our intercourse with the different nations of the world, England has lent us the support of her name and of her arms: we have presented ourselves in all the ports and in all the cities of the globe, not as Americans, a people scarcely heard of, but as English; under the shadow of this respected name, every port was open to us, every way was smooth, every demand was heard with favour. From the moment when our separation shall take place, every thing will assume a contrary direction. The nations will accustom themselves to look upon us with disdain; even the pirates of Africa and Europe will fall upon our vessels, will massacre our seamen, or lead them into a cruel and perpetual slavery.

“There is in the human species, often so inexplicable in their affections, a manifest propensity to oppress the feeble as well as to flatter the powerful. Fear always carries it against reason, pride against moderation, and cruelty against clemency.

“Independence, I am aware, has attractions for all mankind; but I maintain, that in the present quarrel the friends of independence are the promoters of slavery; and that those who desire to separate us, would but render us more dependent; if independence means

the right of commanding, and not the necessity of obeying, and if being dependent is to obey, and not to command. If in rendering ourselves independent of England, supposing, however, that we should be able to effect it, we might be so at the same time of all other nations, I should applaud the project; but to change the condition of English subjects for that of slaves to the whole world, is a step that could only be counselled by insanity. If you would reduce yourselves to the necessity of obeying, in all things, the mandates of supercilious France, who is now kindling fire under our feet, declare yourselves independent. If to British liberty you prefer the liberty of Holland, of Venice, of Genoa, or of Ragusa, declare yourselves independent. But if we would not change the signification of words, let us preserve and carefully maintain this dependence, which has been down to this very hour the principle and source of our prosperity, of our liberty, of our real independence.

“But here I am interrupted, and told that no one questions the advantages which America derived at first from her conjunction with England; but that the new pretensions of the ministers have changed all, have subverted all. If I should deny that, for the last twelve years, the English government has given the most fatal direction to the affairs of the colonies, and that its measures towards us savour of tyranny, I should deny not only what is the manifest truth, but even what I have so often advanced and supported. But is there any doubt that it already feels a secret repentance? These arms, these soldiers, it prepares against us, are not designed to establish ty-

ranny upon our shores, but to vanquish our obstinacy, and compel us to subscribe to conditions of accommodation. In vain is it asserted that the ministry will employ all means to make themselves quite sure of us, in order to exercise upon us, with impunity, all the rigour of their power; for to pretend to reduce us to an absolute impossibility of resistance in cases of oppression, would be, on their part, a chimerical project. The distance of the seat of government, the vast extent of intervening seas, the continual increase of our population, our warlike spirit, our experience in arms, the lakes, the rivers, the forests, the defiles which abound in our territory, are our pledges that England will always prefer to found her power upon moderation and liberty, rather than upon rigour and oppression. An uninterrupted succession of victories and of triumphs could alone constrain England to acknowledge American independence; which, whether we can expect, whoever knows the instability of fortune can easily judge.

“ If we have combated successfully at Lexington and at Boston, Quebec and all Canada have witnessed our reverses. Every one sees the necessity of opposing the extraordinary pretensions of the ministers; but does every body see also that of fighting for independence?

“ It is to be feared, that by changing the object of the war, the present harmony will be interrupted, that the ardour of the people will be chilled by apprehensions for their new situation. By substituting a total dismemberment to the revocation of the laws we complain of, we should fully justify the ministers; we

should merit the infamous name of rebels, and all the British nation would arm, with an unanimous impulse, against those who, from oppressed and complaining subjects, should have become all at once irreconcilable enemies. The English cherish the liberty we defend; they respect the dignity of our cause; but they will blame, they will detest, our recourse to independence, and will unite with one consent to combat us.

“The propagators of the new doctrine are pleased to assure us that, out of jealousy towards England, foreign sovereigns will lavish their succours upon us: as if these sovereigns could sincerely applaud rebellion; as if they had not colonies, even here in America, in which it is important for them to maintain obedience and tranquillity. Let us suppose, however, that jealousy, ambition, or vengeance, should triumph over the fear of insurrections; do you think these princes will not make you pay dear for the assistance with which they flatter you? Who has not learnt, to his cost, the perfidy and the cupidity of Europeans? They will disguise their avarice under pompous words; under the most benevolent pretexts they will despoil us of our territories, they will invade our fisheries and obstruct our navigation, they will attempt our liberty and our privileges. We shall learn too late what it costs to trust in those European flatteries, and to place that confidence in inveterate enemies which has been withdrawn from long tried friends.

“There are many persons who, to gain their ends, extol the advantages of a republic over monarchy. I will not here undertake to examine which of these



two forms of government merits the preference. I know, however, that the English nation, after having tried them both, has never found repose except in monarchy. I know, also, that in popular republics themselves, so necessary is monarchy to cement human society, it has been requisite to institute monarchical powers, more or less extensive, under the names of *Archons*, of *Consuls*, of *Doges*, of *Gonfaloniers*, and finally of *Kings*. Nor should I here omit an observation, the truth of which appears to me incontestable: the English constitution seems to be the fruit of the experience of all anterior time; in which monarchy is so tempered, that the monarch finds himself checked in his efforts to seize absolute power; and the authority of the people is so regulated, that anarchy is not to be feared. But for us it is to be apprehended, that when the counterpoise of monarchy shall no longer exist, the democratic power may carry all before it, and involve the whole state in confusion and ruin. Then an ambitious citizen may arise, seize the reins of power, and annihilate liberty forever; for such is the ordinary career of ill-balanced democracies, they fall into anarchy, and thence under despotism.

“Such are the opinions which might have been offered you with more eloquence, but assuredly not with more zeal or sincerity. May heaven grant that such sinister forebodings be not one day accomplished! May it not permit that, in this solemn concourse of the friends of country, the impassioned language of presumptuous and ardent men should have more influence than the pacific exhortations of good and sober citizens; prudence and moderation found and

preserve empires, temerity and presumption occasion their downfall."

The discourse of Dickinson was heard with attention; but the current flowed irresistibly strong in a contrary direction, and fear acting upon many more powerfully even than their opinion, the majority pronounced in favour of independence. The deputies of Pennsylvania were accordingly authorized to return to Congress, and to consent that the confederate colonies should declare themselves free and independent states.

The formal opposition of Dickinson caused him to be excluded. The same things took place in Maryland; this province, feeble by itself, and situated in the midst of the others, also empowered its deputies to resume their seats in Congress, and to approve independence. Consequently, the fourth of July, 1776, upon the report of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Philip Livingston, the thirteen confederate colonies dissolved all their allegiance towards the British crown, and declared themselves free and independent, under the name of the thirteen *United States of America*. The manifesto which the Congress caused to be published to justify their resolution in the sight of all mankind, was attributed particularly to Jefferson: it was drawn up with great energy of style and of argument. The writers of the time bestowed the highest encomiums on this declaration, which laid the foundation of the independence of a rich and powerful nation.

It commenced with these words:

"When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands

which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent regard to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

“ We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future felicity. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.”

After an exact enumeration of the wrongs received, and of the oppressions sustained, it was added, that "a prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people." Then having recounted the public appeals made at different times to the English people, their constant refusal to hear the voice of justice and of consanguinity, the manifesto concluded with these words:

"We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

"We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour."\*

See Note I.



Such was this famous declaration of the independence of the United States of America, which, if it was necessary, as it appears to have been, was not, however, exempt from peril. For although the greater part of the Americans perceived that the course of things must have led them to this extremity, there were still many who openly manifested contrary sentiments. They were unfortunately more numerous in the provinces menaced by the English than in any other. The American armies were feeble, the treasury poor, foreign succours uncertain, and the ardour of the people might abate all at once.

It was known that England was determined to exert all her forces for the reduction of the colonies, before they should have time to become confirmed in their rebellion, or to form alliances with foreign powers. If the American arms, as there was but too much reason to fear, should prove unfortunate in the ensuing campaign, it could not be disguised that the people would lay it to the charge of independence; and that according to the ordinary movement of the human mind, they would rapidly retrograde towards the opinions they had abjured. When despair once begins, the prostration of energy follows as its immediate consequence. But the war was inevitable, all arrangement impossible, and the Congress urged by necessity to take a decisive resolution. On every side they saw dangers, but they preferred to brave them for the attainment of a determinate object, rather than trust any longer to the uncertain hope of the repeal of the laws against which they were in arms.

For it was even difficult to designate which of these laws were to be revoked. Some desired to have all those repealed which had been passed since the year 1763: others only proscribed a part of them; and there were still others whom a total abrogation would not have satisfied, and who wished also for the abolition of some ancient statutes. In the heat of debates, propositions had been advanced to which it was impossible that Great Britain should ever consent. Nor can it be denied that the declaration of independence was conformable to the nature of things. Circumstances would not have endured much longer that a people like that of America, numerous, wealthy, warlike, and accustomed to liberty, should depend upon another, at a great distance, and little superior in power. The English ministry could not shut their eyes upon it; and such was perhaps the secret reason of their obstinacy in attempting to load the Americans with heavier chains. It is also certain that foreign princes would not have consented to succour, or to receive into their alliance, a people who acknowledged themselves the subjects of another power; whereas it might be expected, that they would unite their efforts to those of a nation determined, at all hazards, to obtain the recognition of its liberty and independence. In the first case, even victory would not have given allies to the Americans; in the second, they were assured of them only by showing themselves resolved to sustain their cause with arms in hand.

However this may be, it is certain that the declaration was received by the people with transports of joy. Nor were any of those public demonstrations omitted which governments are accustomed to employ; on si-

milar occasions, to conciliate the favour of the people to their determinations. Independence was proclaimed, with great solemnity, at Philadelphia, the eighth of July. The artillery was fired, bonfires were kindled; the people seemed actually delirious with exultation. On the eleventh, the manifesto of Congress was published in New York, and was read to each brigade of the American army, which, at that time, was assembled in the vicinity of the city: it was received with universal acclamations. The same evening the statue of king George III., which had been erected in 1770, was taken down and dragged through the streets by the sons of liberty. It was decided, that the lead of which it was composed, should be converted into musket balls. These excesses, however blameable in themselves, were not without utility if considered politically; they excited the people and hurried them on to the object that was desired. At Baltimore, independence having been proclaimed in the presence of cannoniers and militia, the people could not contain their enthusiasm. The air resounded with salutes of artillery, and the shouts that hailed the freedom and happiness of the United States of America. The effigy of the king became the sport of the populace, and was afterwards burnt in the public square.

The rejoicings at Boston were the greatest of all. Independence was there proclaimed from the balcony of the state-house, in the presence of all the authorities, civil and military, and of an immense concourse of people, as well from the city itself as from the country. The garrison was drawn up in order of battle in King-street, which from that moment took the

name of State-street; the troops formed in thirteen detachments, to denote the thirteen United States. At a given signal, a salute of thirteen cannon was fired upon Fort Hill, which was immediately answered by an equal number from the batteries of the Castle, of the Neck, of Nantasket, and of Point Alderton. The garrison, in their turn, fired thirteen salutes of musketry, each detachment firing in succession. The authorities and most considerable inhabitants then convened at a banquet prepared in the council chamber, when they drank toasts to the perpetuity and prosperity of the United States, to the American Congress, to general Washington, to the success of the arms of the confederacy, to the destruction of tyrants, to the propagation of civil and religious liberty, to the friends of the United States in all parts of the world. All the bells rung in token of felicitation; the joy was universal, and its demonstrations were incessantly renewed. In the evening, all the ensigns of royalty, lions, sceptres or crowns, whether sculptured or painted, were torn in pieces and burnt in State-street.

But in Virginia, it would be impossible to describe the exultation that was manifested.

The Virginian convention decreed that the name of the king should be suppressed in all the public prayers. They ordained that the great seal of the commonwealth of Virginia should represent Virtue as the tutelary genius of the province, robed in drapery of an Amazon, resting one hand upon her lance, and holding with the other a sword, trampling upon tyranny, under the figure of a prostrate man, having near



him a crown fallen from his head, and bearing in one hand a broken chain, and in the other a scourge. At foot was charactered the word Virginia, and round the effigy of Virtue was inscribed:—*Sic semper tyrannis*. The reverse represented a group of figures; in the middle stood Liberty with her wand and cap; on one side was Ceres, with the horn of plenty in the right hand, and a sheaf of wheat in the left; upon the other appeared Eternity, with the globe and the phœnix. At foot were found these words:—*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit*.

In the midst of these transports, nothing was forgotten that might tend to inspire the people with affection for the new order of things, and a violent hatred, not only towards tyranny, but also against monarchy; the republicans using all their address to confound the one with the other as eternally inseparable by their essence.

Thus, on the one hand, the American patriots, by their secret manœuvres, and then by a daring resolution; and on the other, the British ministers, at first by oppressive laws, and afterwards by hesitating counsels and the employment of an inadequate force, gave origin to a crisis which eventually produced the entire dismemberment of a splendid and powerful empire. So constant are men in the pursuit of liberty; and so obstinate in ambition. But also so timid are they in their resolutions, and ever more prompt to warn their enemy of his danger by threats, than to overwhelm him by force.

It is certain that the English ministers wanted either sagacity to foresee the evil, or energy to remedy it.

The tumults of America broke out unobserved, and grew without obstacle, till at length, swoln like an overflowing river, they acquired such an impetuosity as to sweep before them the impotent dikes with which it was attempted too late to oppose them.

END OF BOOK SIXTH.



## NOTE TO BOOK VI.

### Note I.—Page 105.

*The members who then composed the Congress, and who all signed the declaration, are the following:*

#### JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

##### *New Hampshire.*

Josiah Bartlett,  
William Whipple,  
Matthew Thornton.

##### *Massachusetts.*

Samuel Adams,  
John Adams,  
Robert Treat Paine,  
Elbridge Gerry.

##### *Rhode Island.*

Stephen Hopkins,  
William Ellery.

##### *Connecticut.*

Roger Sherman,  
Samuel Huntington,  
William Williams,  
Oliver Wolcott.

##### *New York.*

William Floyd,  
Philip Livingston,  
Francis Lewis,  
Lewis Morris.

##### *New Jersey.*

Richard Stockton,  
John Witherspoon,  
Francis Hopkinson,  
John Hart,  
Abraham Clark.

##### *Pennsylvania.*

Robert Morris,  
Benjamin Rush,  
Benjamin Franklin,  
John Morton,  
George Clymer,

James Smith,  
George Taylor,  
James Wilson,  
George Ross.

##### *Delaware.*

Cæsar Rodney,  
George Read.

##### *Maryland.*

Samuel Chase,  
William Paca,  
Thomas Stone,  
Charles Carroll, of Carrollton.

##### *Virginia.*

George Wythe,  
Richard Henry Lee,  
Thomas Jefferson,  
Benjamin Harrison,  
Thomas Nelson, Jun.  
Francis Lightfoot Lee,  
Carter Braxton.

##### *North Carolina.*

William Hooper,  
Joseph Hewes,  
John Penn.

##### *South Carolina.*

Edward Rutledge,  
Thomas Heyward, Jun.  
Thomas Lynch, Jun.  
Arthur Middleton.

##### *Georgia.*

Button Gwinnett,  
Lyman Hall,  
George Walton.





## BOOK SEVENTH.

1776.

HAVING sketched the two first periods of this obstinate contest, in the first of which we have seen the British ministers provoking the Americans, by oppressive laws, to resistance and revolt; and in the second, conducting the war which ensued with feeble counsels and insufficient means; the order of history requires that we should now proceed to the recital of the events which signalized the third, wherein, at length displaying all their force, they proposed to suppress the rebellion entirely, and to reduce the colonists to subjection.

General Howe having arrived from Halifax, landed the twenty-fifth of June at Sandy Hook, a point of land situated at the entrance of the Gulf, comprehended between the main land of New Jersey, the mouth of the Rariton, Staten Island, and the opening of the bay of New York, on the one side, and Long Island on the other. On the second of July he took possession of Staten Island. The resolution of independence may, therefore, be praised for its boldness, or blamed for its temerity; which was taken, as is seen, at the very instant when England was preparing to attack, with formidable forces, the most vulnerable parts of America. The general would have preferred waiting at Halifax till the arrival of the re-enforcements expected from Europe, with the fleet of his brother, the admiral, in order to repair, in concert

with him, to the waters of New York, and to terminate the war by a sudden and decisive blow. But the English fleet delayed to appear, and the quarters of Halifax were as inconvenient, as provisions were scarce there; a part of the troops had been compelled to remain on board the ships. The season for operations also advancing, general Howe determined to go and wait for his re-enforcements in the vicinity of New York; the squadron of convoy was commanded by admiral Shuldham.

He was joined in the passage by some regiments that, having been separated from the fleet by contrary winds, were steering alone for Halifax. Other corps fell into the power of the American cruisers. The inhabitants of Staten Island received the English general with great demonstrations of joy: the soldiers being quartered about in the villages, found, in abundance, the refreshments of which they were in the greatest need. Here general Howe was visited by governor Tryon, who gave him precise information with respect to the state of the province, as also with regard to the forces and preparations of the enemy. Many inhabitants of New Jersey came to offer themselves to be enrolled for the royal service; even those of Staten Island were forward to enlist under the English standard; every thing announced that the army had only to show itself in the provinces to be assured of a prompt victory. Admiral Howe, after touching at Halifax, where he found despatches from his brother, who urged him to come and join him at New York, made sail again immediately, and landed, without accident at Staten Island, the twelfth of July. General Clinton arrived there about the same time with the

troops he re-conducted from the unfortunate expedition of Charleston. Commodore Hotham also appeared there with the re-enforcements under his escort; so that in a short time the army amounted to about twenty-four thousand men, between English, Hessians, and Waldeckers. Several regiments of Hessian infantry were expected to arrive shortly, when the army would be carried to the number of thirty-five thousand combatants, of the best troops of Europe. America had never seen such a display of forces.

It began now to appear that the ministers had at length adopted vigorous measures, hoping to terminate the war at a blow, and to repair the evils produced by their long hesitations and delays.

General and admiral Howe, both officers of high distinction, were to combine their efforts against the province of New York; which, feeble by itself, broken by a great number of islands and large rivers, and offering a great extent of coasts, was more exposed than any other to the attacks of an enemy that was master at sea.

The English army was abundantly provided with arms and munitions, and the soldiers manifested an extreme ardour for the service of the king. The English, besides their particular hatred against the insurgents, were also stimulated by their national jealousy towards the Germans; they considered the confidence placed by the government in these strangers as indicating a want of it in them. They were eager to prove to the world that, without their assistance, they were capable of subduing America. The Germans, on their part, who justly thought themselves



not inferior to the English, would by no means appear to yield to them, and this reciprocal emulation warranted the expectation of extreme efforts on the one part and on the other. When the submission of the province of New York should have given the English a firm footing in America, small garrisons, supported by a formidable maritime force, would be sufficient to defend it against the insults of the enemy, and the army might safely proceed to the conquest of the adjacent provinces.

New York, forming the centre of the American colonies, the English army would be able to turn at will, either upon the right, in order to carry the war into Connecticut and all New England, or upon the left to scour New Jersey and menace Philadelphia itself. It was besides very easy, by means of frigates and other smaller vessels, to maintain the communication between the two parts of the army upon the right and left banks of the Hudson, and even to pass it upon occasion, and promptly transport troops from one side to the other.

Finally, this position of New York, as well by its nature as by reason of the numerous marine of the English, was for them a place of arms, whence they could infest the neighbouring places, attack their enemies at their own time, combat them with success, and retreat without danger.

They resolved, accordingly, to make it the centre of their operations; the loyalists were also very numerous there, and in no city of America was the party of the Congress more feeble.

There occurred, also, another consideration of the highest importance. If general Carleton, after hav-

ing passed, as was hoped, the lakes of Canada, could penetrate to the banks of the Hudson, and descend this river at the same time that General Howe should ascend it, their junction would have the immediate effect of interrupting all communication between the provinces of New England, situated upon the left bank, and those of the middle and south, which are found upon the right; and such had always been the favourite plan of the ministry.

Finally, it was considered that Long Island, separated from the island of New York only by the East river, and being abundant in grains and in cattle, offered the means of subsistence for the most numerous army. Its inhabitants, besides, were believed to be well inclined towards the royal cause.

While general Howe was seconded in his invasion of New York by the twelve or thirteen thousand men coming from Canada under governor Carleton, general Clinton was to operate in the provinces of the south, and to attack Charleston. The American troops being thus divided, and their generals surprised and pressed on so many sides at once, it was not doubted but that the British arms would soon obtain a complete triumph. But there happened in this occurrence what is often seen in the execution of human designs, when their success depends upon the concurrence of a great number of parts; one proceeds towards the object, another recedes from it, and all equally miss it.

A prosperous event in this business appeared the less probable, since independently of the obstacles raised by men, it was necessary also to combat the winds and the seasons. Would it not have been cal-

culating upon a scarcely possible contingency, to have expected the arrival of three distinct corps of the army at their places of destination at the hour prefixed, so as to operate in perfect concert? Was it even certain that all the three would prove victorious? This, however, was necessary to secure the execution of the plan of the campaign.

It happened, therefore, on the one part, that admiral Howe, having been retarded by contrary winds, did not land his re-enforcements till after the expedition of Charleston had totally miscarried, as we have related. And on the other, the army of Canada encountered so many obstacles to the passage of the lakes, that it was not able to make its way this year to the banks of the Hudson. Whence it resulted not only that Washington was not compelled to weaken the already feeble army which he had upon the coasts, in order to send succours into South Carolina, or towards Canada, but that the same soldiers who had so valiantly defended Charleston, went to re-enforce those who guarded the passage of the lakes, or joined the principal army. But notwithstanding these failures, it was still confidently hoped that general Howe would be able alone to make a decisive campaign. This hope was not perhaps devoid of all foundation. It is plain, therefore, how many probabilities the British ministers and generals would have united in their favour, if instead of having scattered their forces upon several points, they had concentrated them in a single mass, leaving only sufficient garrisons in the places necessary to their operations.

The Americans, on their part, had neglected no preparative in order to resist the storm with which

they were menaced. The Congress had ordained the construction of rafts, of gun-boats, of galleys, and of floating batteries, for the defence of the port of New York and the mouths of the Hudson. But it could not be hoped that such feeble preparations were competent to oppose, with any chance of success, the formidable marine of England.

The Congress had also decreed that thirteen thousand of the provincial militia should go and join the army of Washington, who, being seasonably apprized of the danger of New York, had made a movement into that quarter; they also directed the organization of a corps of ten thousand men, destined to serve as a reserve in the provinces of the centre. All the weakest posts had been carefully intrenched, and furnished with artillery. A strong detachment occupied Long Island, to prevent the English from landing there, or to repulse them if they should effect a debarkation. But the army of the Congress was very far from having all the necessary means to support the burthen of so terrible a war. It wanted arms, and it was wasted by diseases. The reiterated instances of the commander-in-chief had drawn into his camp the militia of the neighbouring provinces, and some regular regiments from Maryland, from Pennsylvania, and from New England, which had carried his army to the number of twenty-seven thousand men; but a fourth part of these troops was composed of invalids, and scarcely was another fourth furnished with arms. The greatest part, without order, as without discipline, could inspire little confidence.

These inconveniences, so seriously alarming for the success of the American cause, proceeded partly



from the want of money, which prevented the Congress from paying regular troops and providing for their equipment, and partly from an impolitic parsimony contracted during peace, which withheld them from incurring, with promptitude, the expenses rendered necessary by a state of war. Their rooted jealousy of standing armies contributed also to the same effect; it had even inspired them with the idle hope of being able to organize every year an army sufficient to resist the forces of the enemy.

Perhaps, finally, many of the colonists were reluctant to take arms, because they still flattered themselves that the commissioners of the king, being at the same time chiefs of the troops, and negotiators of peace, might succeed in effecting a general reconciliation.

The American army, such as it was, occupied the positions most suitable to cover the menaced points. The corps which had been stationed in Long Island was commanded by major-general Greene, who, on account of sickness, was afterwards succeeded by general Sullivan. The main body of the army encamped in the island of New York, which, it appeared, was destined to receive the first blows of the English.

Two feeble detachments guarded Governor's Island, and the point of Paulus' Hook, situated in front of New York, upon the right bank of the Hudson. The militia of the province, commanded by the American general Clinton, were posted upon the banks of the sound, where they occupied the two Chesters, East and West, and New Rochelle. For it was to be feared that the enemy, landing in force upon the north shore of the sound, might penetrate to Kingsbridge,



and thus entirely lock up all the American troops in the island of New York.

All being prepared on the one side for attack, on the other for defence, and the two parties appearing equally decided to refer the destiny of America to the chance of battles, the English commissioners, before coming to this appeal, wished to make trial of the pacific powers with which they were invested. Already, in the month of June, Lord Howe, being upon the coasts of Massachusetts in the *Eagle* ship of the line, had, in the name of the king, addressed a letter to all the governors who had been expelled from their provinces, enjoining them to use all possible means to spread it among the inhabitants.

He therein announced that the king had authorized two commissioners to grant general or particular pardons to all those who, during the troubles, had departed from the obedience due to the crown, but who now desired to return to their duty, and participate in the benefits of the royal clemency. He also declared that the commissioners were empowered to proclaim any province or city whatsoever to be in the king's peace, which immediately sheltered them from the effect of the penal laws against rebellion. Finally, he promised large recompense to such as, by their services, should contribute to re-establish the royal authority. These writings, commonly brought by flags, circulated in the country; and general Washington sent by express to Congress a proclamation which had been addressed to the city of Amboy. That assembly took the noble resolution of causing it to be printed in all the public papers, in order that the good people of the United States, such were the

words of the resolution, might be informed of the powers of the commissioners, and of the means by which Great Britain hoped to lull them into security and to disarm them; and also that the most obstinate might be convinced that they could no longer expect the preservation of their privileges, but from their arms alone.

In the mean time, a letter was brought from Lord Howe, directed simply to George Washington, Esq. The general refused to receive it, alleging, that whoever had written it had not expressed his public station, and that as a private individual he could not, and would not, hold any communication, whether written or verbal, with the commanders of the king. His conduct in this instance was much applauded by the Congress; and they decreed that in future none of their officers should receive letters or messages, on the part of the enemy, that were not addressed to them according to their respective rank.

The English commissioners were unwilling that a mere point of ceremonial should interrupt negotiations from which they expected some advantage. They could not, on the other hand, consent to acknowledge in the Generalissimo of Congress a rank which had been conferred, as they believed, by an unlawful authority.

They had recourse, therefore, to an expedient by which they hoped to obviate all difficulty; they changed the address of their letter for the superscription following: *to George Washington, &c. &c.* Adjutant-general Patterson was sent with this despatch. Being introduced to Washington, he gave him in conversation the title of *Excellency*. The general received

him with great politeness, but at the same time with much dignity. The adjutant expressed great concern, in the behalf of his principals, on account of the difficulties that had arisen about the superscription of the letter; assured him of their high regard for his personal character, and that they had no intention to undervalue his rank. It was hoped, therefore, that the *et ceteras*, being in use between ambassadors when they were not perfectly agreed upon points of etiquette, would remove all obstructions to their mutual intercourse.

Washington answered, that a letter written to a person invested with a public character should specify it; otherwise it could not be distinguished from a private letter; that it was true the *et ceteras* implied every thing; but it was no less true that they implied any thing; and that, as to himself, he would never consent to receive any letter, relating to public affairs, that should be directed to him, without a designation of his rank and office. Patterson requested that this question might be waived; and turned the conversation upon prisoners of war. He expatiated in magnificent terms upon the goodness and clemency of the king, who had chosen for negotiators lord and general Howe. He affirmed that their desire to terminate the differences which had arisen between the two people was as earnest as their powers were ample; and that he hoped the general would consider this visit as the first step towards it. Washington replied, that he was not authorized to negotiate; but that it did not appear that the powers of the commissioners consisted in any more than in granting pardons; that America, not having committed any offence, asked

for no forgiveness, and was only defending her unquestionable rights. Patterson exclaimed that this subject would open too vast a field of discussion; and repeating his regrets that a strict observation of formalities should interrupt the course of so important an affair, he took leave of the general, and withdrew. This conference thus remained without result, and all thoughts were again concentrated in war. The Congress were perfectly aware, on the one hand, of the shame they must incur by departing from the resolution so recently taken of asserting independence, and they feared on the other that the propositions of England might contain some secret poison. They caused an exact relation to be printed of the interview between the commander-in-chief and the English adjutant-general.

The British generals seeing that the obstinacy of the Americans left them no longer any hope of an accommodation, directed their entire attention to the prosecution of the war, and resolved to strike the first blows without longer delay. Wishing, in the first place, to secure a post which might serve in case of need as a place of retreat, and to furnish the means of subsistence for so powerful an army, they decided to attack Long Island, in which they depended for success upon the superiority of military talents which they believed themselves to have, and which they really had, over the Americans. Accordingly, having made all their dispositions, the twenty-second of August, the fleet approached the west coast of the island near the strait, called the *Narrows*, which separates it from Staten Island; all the troops found an easy and secure landing place between the villages of



Gravesend and New Utrecht, where they debarked without meeting any resistance on the part of the Americans.

A great part of their army, under the command of general Putnam, encamped at Brookland or Brooklyn, in a part of the island itself which forms a sort of peninsula. He had strongly fortified the entrance of it with moats and intrenchments; his left wing rested upon the *Wallabout* bay, and his right was covered by a marsh contiguous to another bay, called *Gowan's Cove*. Behind him he had Governor's Island, and the arm of the sea which separates Long Island from the Island of New-York, and which gave him a direct communication with the city, where the other part of the army was stationed under Washington himself. The commander-in-chief perceiving that battle was approaching, continually exhorted his men to keep their ranks, and summon all their courage: he reminded them that in their valour rested the only hope that remained to American liberty; that upon their resistance depended the preservation or the pillage of their property by barbarians; that they were about to combat in defence of their parents, their wives, their children, from the outrages of a licentious soldiery; that the eyes of America were fixed upon her champions, and expected from their success on this day either safety or total destruction.

The English having effected their landing, marched rapidly forward. The two armies were separated by a chain of hills, covered with woods, called the heights of Guan, and which, running from west to east, divide the island into two parts. They are only practicable upon three points; one of which is



near the Narrows, the road leading to that of the centre passes by a village named *Flatbush*, and the third is approached, far to the right, by the route of another village called *Flatland*. Upon the summit of the hills is found a road which follows the length of the range, and leads from *Bedford* to *Jamaica*, which is intersected by the two roads last described: these ways are all interrupted by precipices, and by excessively difficult and narrow defiles.

The American general wishing to arrest the enemy upon these heights, had carefully furnished them with troops, so that if all had done their duty, the English would not have been able to force the passages without extreme difficulty and danger. The posts were so frequent upon the road from Bedford to Jamaica, that it was easy to transmit, from one of these points to the other, the most prompt intelligence of what passed upon the three routes.

Colonel Miles, with his battalion, was to guard the road of Flatland, and to scour it continually with his scouts, as well as that of Jamaica, in order to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy. Meanwhile the British army pressed forward, its left wing being to the north, and its right to the south; the village of Falmouth was found in its centre. The Hessians, commanded by general Heister, formed the main body; the English, under major-general Grant, the left; and other corps, conducted by general Clinton, and the two lords, Percy and Cornwallis, composed the right. In this wing the British generals had placed their principal hope of success; they directed it upon Flatland. Their plan was, that while the corps of general Grant, and the Hessians of general Heister, should disquiet

the enemy upon the two first defiles, the left wing, taking a circuit, should march through Flatland, and endeavour to seize the point of intersection of this road with that of Jamaica; and then rapidly descending into the plain which extends at the foot of the heights, upon the other side, should fall upon the Americans in flank and rear. The English hoped, that as this post was the most distant from the centre of the army, the advanced guards would be found more feeble there, and perhaps more negligent: finally, they calculated that, in all events, the Americans would not be able to defend it against a force so superior. This right wing of the English was, in effect, the most numerous, and entirely composed of select troops.

The evening of the twenty-sixth of August, general Clinton commanding the vanguard, which consisted in light infantry; Lord Percy the centre, where were found the grenadiers, the artillery, and the cavalry; and Cornwallis the rear-guard, followed by the baggage, some regiments of infantry and of heavy artillery; all this part of the English army put itself in motion with admirable order and silence, and leaving Flatland, traversed the country called New-Lots. Colonel Miles, who this night performed his service with little exactness, did not perceive the approach of the enemy; so that two hours before day the English were already arrived within a half mile of the road of Jamaica, upon the heights. Then general Clinton halted, and prepared himself for the attack. He had met one of the enemy's patrols and made him prisoner.

General Sullivan, who commanded all the troops in advance of the camp of Brooklyn, had no advice of

what passed in this quarter. He neglected to send out fresh scouts; perhaps he supposed the English would direct their principal efforts against his right wing, as being the nearest to them.

General Clinton learning from his prisoners that the road of Jamaica was not guarded, hastened to avail himself of the circumstance, and occupied it by a rapid movement. Without loss of time, he immediately bore to his left towards Bedford, and seized an important defile which the American generals had left unguarded. From this moment the success of the day was decided in favour of the English.

Lord Percy came up with his corps; and the entire column descended by the village of Bedford from the heights into the plain which lay between the hills and the camp of the Americans. During this time general Grant, in order to amuse the enemy and divert his attention from the events which took place upon the route of Flatland, endeavoured to disquiet him upon his right; accordingly, as if he intended to force the defile which led to it, he had put himself in motion about midnight, and had attacked the militia of New York and of Pennsylvania who guarded it. They at first gave ground; but general Parsons being arrived, and having occupied an eminence, he renewed the combat, and maintained his position till brigadier-general Lord Sterling came to his assistance with fifteen hundred men. The action became extremely animated, and fortune favoured neither the one side nor the other. The Hessians, on their part, had attacked the centre at break of day; and the Americans, commanded by general Sullivan in person, valiantly sustained their efforts. At the same time the English

ships, after having made several movements, opened a very brisk cannonade against a battery established in the little island of Red Hook, upon the right flank of the Americans, who combated against general Grant.

This also was a diversion, the object of which was to prevent them from attending to what passed in the centre and on the left. The Americans defended themselves, however, with extreme gallantry, ignorant that so much valour was exerted in vain, since victory was already in the hands of the enemy. General Clinton being descended into the plain, fell upon the left flank of the centre, which was engaged with the Hessians. He had previously detached a strong corps in order to intercept the Americans.

As soon as the appearance of the English light infantry apprized them of their danger, they sounded the retreat, and retired in good order towards their camp, bringing off their artillery. But they soon fell in with the party of royal troops which had occupied the ground on their rear, and who now charged them with fury; they were compelled to throw themselves into the neighbouring woods, where they met again with the Hessians, who repulsed them upon the English, and thus the Americans were driven several times by the one against the other with great loss.

They continued for some time in this desperate situation, till at length several regiments, animated by an heroic valour, opened their way through the midst of the enemy, and gained the camp of general Putnam; others escaped through the woods. The inequality of the ground, the great number of positions which it offered, and the disorder which prevailed throughout



the line, were the cause that for several hours divers partial combats were maintained, in which many of the Americans fell.

Their left wing and centre being discomfited, the English, desirous of a complete victory, made a rapid movement against the rear of the right wing, which, in ignorance of the misfortune which had befallen the other corps, was engaged with general Grant. Finally, having received the intelligence, they retired. But encountering the English who cut off their retreat, a part of the soldiers took shelter in the woods, others endeavoured to make their way through the marshes of Gowan's Cove; but here many were drowned in the waters, or perished in the mud; a very small number only escaped the hot pursuit of the victors, and reached the camp in safety. The total loss of the Americans, in this battle, was estimated at more than three thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. Among the last were found general Sullivan, and brigadier-generals Lord Sterling and Woodhull. Almost the entire regiment of Maryland, consisting of young men of the best families in that province, was cut in pieces. Six pieces of cannon fell into the power of the victors. The loss of the English was very inconsiderable; in killed, wounded, and prisoners, it did not amount to four hundred men.

The Americans, in this day, assuredly committed a great fault, since they were forced to combat with a part of their forces against all those of the enemy. They omitted to use the requisite diligence to inform themselves of the quantity of troops disembarked; they neglected to cause the roads of the heights to be properly scoured by their scouts, and especially those



upon their left, which was the menaced part; finally, they had not sufficiently guarded the difficult passes upon the road of Jamaica. There even arose some rumours which threw suspicions of treachery upon those who were charged with this guard; but it is certain that they were culpable rather of negligence than of evil intentions. Colonel Miles enjoyed a reputation that placed him above suspicion. It appears, indeed, that general Sullivan, either from too much confidence or too much mildness, did not employ all the rigorous means which so important a circumstance exacted to prevent the secret intelligence of the loyalists with the English; these were, therefore, diligently informed of the weakest places, and of the negligence with which the service was performed. The English and the Hessians combated not only with courage, but even with an impetuous ardour, excited by their reciprocal emulation, and by the desire to efface the stains of former defeats.

In the height of the engagement, general Washington had crossed over to Brooklyn from New York, and seeing some of his best troops slaughtered or taken, he uttered, it is said, an exclamation of anguish. He could, if he saw fit, draw out of their encampment all the troops, and send them to succour the corps that were engaged with the enemy; he might also call over all the forces he had in New York, and order them to take part in the battle. But all these re-enforcements would by no means have sufficed to render his army equal to that of the English. Victory having already declared in their favour, the courage with which it inspired them, and the superiority of their discipline, cut off all hope of being able to re-

store the battle. If Washington had engaged all his troops in the action, it is probable that the entire army would have been destroyed on this fatal day, and America reduced to subjection. Great praise, therefore, is due him for not having allowed himself, in so grave an occurrence, to be transported into an inconsiderate resolution, and for having preserved himself and his army for a happier future.

The English were so elated with victory, that eager to profit by their advantages they would fain have immediately assaulted the American camp. But their general manifested more prudence: whether he believed the intrenchments of the enemy stronger than they really were, or whether he considered himself already sure of entering New York without encountering new perils, he repressed the ardour of his troops. Afterwards, having encamped in front of the enemy's lines in the night of the twenty-eighth, he broke ground within six hundred paces of a bastion upon the left. His intention was to approach by means of trenches, and to wait till the fleet could co-operate with the land troops.

The situation of the Americans in their camp became extremely critical. They had in front an enemy superior in number, and who could attack them at every moment with a new advantage. Their intrenchments were of little moment, and the English, pushing their works with ardour, had every probability of success in their favour.

For two days and two nights the rain had fallen by torrents; the arms and ammunition suffered from it alike. The soldiers, overwhelmed with fatigue and discouraged by defeat, would have made but a feeble

resistance. The English ships were in readiness to enter the East river. They had hitherto been prevented by a north-east wind, which for them was as contrary as it was propitious for the Americans. But it might change the next moment, and the English once masters of this river, retreat was intercepted to the soldiers of Congress, and the whole army would have incurred the danger of being forced to surrender to the superior force of the enemy. The council of war being assembled, the American generals resolved to evacuate their position and to withdraw into New York. All the dispositions having been made, the retreat across the East river was undertaken. Colonel Glover commanded the vessels and flat boats of transport, general Macdougall was charged with the embarkation, and colonel Mifflin was to cover the rear-guard. The twenty-ninth, at eight in the evening, the troops began to move with the greatest silence. But they were not on board before eleven. A violent north-east wind and the ebb-tide, which rendered the current very rapid, prevented the passage: the time pressed however. Fortunately, the wind suddenly veered to the north-west; they immediately made sail and landed in New York. Providence appeared to have watched over the Americans: about two o'clock in the morning, a thick fog, and at this season of the year extraordinary, covered all Long Island, whereas the air was perfectly clear on the side of New York.

Notwithstanding the intreaties of his officers, Washington remained the last upon the shore; he refused to embark till he saw his troops all on board. They amounted in all to nine thousand men.

The artillery, baggage, camp equipage, munitions, every thing was safely transported to the other side. It was not till the next morning, the sun being already high, and after the mist was dissipated, that the English discovered, to their great surprise, that the Americans had abandoned their camp, and were already sheltered from all pursuit. They perceived only a part of the rear-guard, out of reach in their boats, who had returned to carry away some munitions which had been left in the island.

Whoever will attend to all the details of this retreat, will easily believe that no military operation was ever conducted by great captains with more ability and prudence, or under more favourable auspices.

It still remained to evacuate Governor's Island, situated at the mouth of the East river: it was occupied by two regiments, with a numerous artillery and abundant munitions. The Americans had fortified it to interdict the entrance of this river to the English. But after the loss of Long Island, it could not be hoped to defend the passage, and the garrison was in danger of falling into the power of the enemy. The evacuation of Governor's Island was also effected without accident, notwithstanding the vicinity of the English ships. Thus all the American army, after the defeat of Long Island, found itself united in the island of New York.

The check of Brooklyn had made upon the Americans a profound impression of terror, and their position actually became very alarming.

Until then they had flattered themselves that heaven would constantly favour their arms; and it was, in

truth, the first time that fortune had betrayed them so cruelly. But not having been accustomed to her rigours, from the excess of confidence which intoxicated them in prosperity, they fell all at once into that of dejection.

They had persuaded themselves that personal valour completely supplied the want of discipline; and they had gone so far as even to hold in derision the European system of tactics. But since they had found, by fatal experience, of how much utility it was in regular battles, their eyes were opened, and they had lost all confidence in themselves. At first they had believed that courage, without discipline, could do all; they now thought it could do nothing. At every moment they were apprehensive of some new surprise; at every step of falling into an ambuscade. Thus, from discouragement, they became still more negligent of order. The militia especially, according to the usage of multitudes armed in moments of emergency, became every day more disorderly and intractable. Not content with enjoying a liberty without bounds in the camp, they abandoned their colours by hundreds, and entire regiments deserted to return to their provinces. Their example became fatal to the regular troops themselves; their subordination diminished, and desertion enfeebled them daily. Their engagement was but for one year, and even in some corps only for a few weeks; the hope of soon returning to their families and friends so acted upon these soldiers that they avoided dangers. Ardour and enthusiasm had at first overruled these domestic affections; but they now triumphed over a zeal extinguished by ill fortune.



The fidelity of the generals was not suspected, but their talents were distrusted, and every thing appeared to threaten a total dissolution. Confounded by the blows of fortune, and little used to support them, the Americans thus gave themselves up for lost. Washington contended earnestly with exhortations, with persuasions, and with promises, to arrest the progress of the disorganization. Wherein, if he did not succeed according to his desires, he obtained, however, more than his hopes. The greater part, yielding to his authority and the benevolence they bore him, consented to remain. He had not neglected to address the Congress an energetic picture of the deplorable situation of his army: he represented to them how important it was to accept no more engagements, but for the total duration of the war; and he assured them that he must despair of American liberty, unless he was furnished with an army that should stand by him till the conclusion of the enterprise. The remonstrances and instances of the commander-in-chief, were seconded by all the military chiefs of distinction that were found at that time in America, and the Congress at length yielded to their desires. They decreed that a regular army should be formed, in which the soldiers should be enlisted to serve during the present war; and that it should be composed of eighty-eight battalions, to be raised in all the provinces according to their respective abilities.\* To in-

\* The eighty-eight battalions decreed by Congress were to be furnished in the following proportion:—Three in New Hampshire, fifteen in Massachusetts, two in Rhode Island, eight in Connecticut, four in New York, four in New Jersey, twelve in Pennsylvania, one in Delaware, eight in Maryland, fifteen in Virginia, nine in North Carolina, six in South Carolina, and one in Georgia.

duce the inhabitants to enlist, the Congress decreed, besides, that a bounty of twenty dollars should be given to each man at the time of engagement, and portions of unoccupied lands were promised to the officers and soldiers.\* But from the difficulty of finding men who would enlist for the whole term of the war, this resolution was afterwards modified, so as to admit of engagements either for three years or during the war; specifying, however, that such as enlisted only for three years had no right to grants of land. This measure was of great utility. Here also is seen the power of good or ill fortune over nations. If those who allow themselves to be over-elated by prosperity, are without courage in adversity, those who use the favours of fortune with moderation, are able to support its reverses with fortitude.

General Howe, wishing to take advantage of the terror which victory inspires, and persuading himself that the Americans, disheartened by so many checks, would be more modest in their pretensions, despatched general Sullivan to the Congress with a message purporting, that though he could not consistently treat with that assembly in the character they had assumed, yet he would gladly confer with some of their members in their private capacity, and would meet them at any place they would appoint. He informed them that he was empowered, with the admiral his brother, to terminate the contest between Great Britain and

\* The grant of lands was thus regulated:—Five hundred acres to a colonel, four hundred to a major, three hundred to a captain, two hundred to a lieutenant, one hundred and fifty to an ensign, and one hundred to non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

America upon conditions equally advantageous to both; these conditions, he added, he had not been able to obtain till after two months delay, which had prevented him from arriving before the declaration of independence. He expressed an earnest desire that an arrangement might take place before the events of the war became so decisive as to render it no longer a matter of choice for one of the parties to treat. He assured them, that if they were inclined to enter into an agreement, much might be granted to them which they had not required. He concluded by saying, that should the conference produce the probability of an accommodation, the authority of Congress would be acknowledged in order to render the treaty valid and complete in every respect. The commissioners hoped thus, by insidious words, to dispose the Americans to resume the yoke of England without dread.

It would be difficult to decide whether these propositions announced, on the part of the English, more hope than despair of victory. Perhaps the commissioners, not being authorized to grant all the conditions they offered, merely threw them out to create parties, or to amuse the Americans and to divert them from their preparations of war. However this may be, the Congress deliberated maturely upon this overture. Their refusal to listen to the proffered terms might alienate the minds of many; and their consenting to enter into negotiation was a tacit admission that the declaration of independence was not irrevocable, or that ill fortune began to shake their constancy. The Congress, to avoid either of these inconveniences, though persuaded of the insincerity of the commissioners, decided for a middle course.

They made answer, through general Sullivan, that the Congress of the free and independent states of America could not, consistently with the trust reposed in them, send any of their members to confer with whomsoever, otherwise than in their public capacity. But that as they desired that peace might be concluded upon equitable conditions, they would depute a committee of their body to learn whether the commissioners were authorized to treat, and what proposals they had to offer. Washington was instructed, at the same time, to answer any overtures that might be made him, by saying that the United States having taken arms to defend their existence and their liberty, would willingly consent to peace provided the terms of it were reasonable, and drawn up first in writing in order to be laid before Congress.

Thus the Americans appeared to incline for independence, without insisting, however, upon this point as an indispensable condition of peace, in order to reserve a way open to reconciliation if the fate of arms should prove too adverse. The deputies, appointed by Congress to hear the propositions of the commissioners, were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, all three zealous partisans of independence. The interview took place the eleventh of September, in Staten Island, opposite Amboy. Admiral Howe spoke the first, saying, that though he could not treat with them as a committee of Congress, yet as he was authorized to confer with any gentlemen of influence in the colonies, on the means of restoring peace, he felt a real gratification in the present occasion to discourse with them upon this important subject.



The deputies replied, that since they were come to hear him, he was at liberty to look upon them in what light he pleased; that they could not, however, consider themselves in any other character than that in which the Congress had placed them. Howe then entered upon the subject of the meeting; he demanded that the colonies should return to their allegiance and duty towards the British crown; he assured them of the earnest desire of the king to make his government easy and acceptable to them in every respect; that those acts of parliament which were so obnoxious to them would undergo a revisal, and the instructions to governors would be reconsidered; that if any just causes of complaint were found in the acts or instructions they might be removed.

After having recounted the tyrannical acts of parliament, of which all their supplications had failed to procure the repeal, the deputies added, in reply, that a return to the domination of Great Britain was not now to be expected.—“There was no doubt, they said, that the Americans were inclined to peace, and willing to enter into any treaty with Britain that might be advantageous to both countries. If there was the same good disposition on her part, it would be easier for the commissioners, though not empowered at present to treat with them as independent states, to obtain fresh powers from their government for that purpose, than it would be for the Congress to procure them from the colonies to consent to submission.”

Howe then put an end to the conference, by saying that he deeply regretted there was no longer any hope of an accommodation.



The three deputies made their report to Congress of the issue of this interview, observing that the powers of the English commissioners were insufficient, and that it was impossible to place any dependence upon their offers or their promises. The Congress approved their conduct. This attempt at negotiation, therefore, served only to demonstrate, on the one hand, that the Congress persevering in their resolution and undaunted by reverses, were determined not to receive conditions from their enemies; and, on the other, how greatly the English government was still deceived with respect to the spirit which prevailed in America, and as to the means proper to be employed for the re-establishment of the ancient order of things.

But it seems in this revolution to have been the destiny of things, that the remedies should always arrive after the evils were become incurable; and, that the government refusing out of pride at the favourable moment, to acquiesce in useful concessions, should afterwards have to submit to the rejection of its useless propositions.

The English generals, convinced by experience, that they must renounce all hope of accommodation, now turned their attention exclusively to military operations. The royal army found itself separated from that of the Congress only by the East river, which communicating with *Harlem-Creek* flows between Long Island and Morrisania on the one part, and the island of New York on the other. The intention of the English was to land in some part of this last, where the least resistance could be opposed to them. Their ships cruised along the coasts, threatening

sometimes one place and sometimes another, in order to keep the enemy at all points in uncertainty, and afterwards to attack upon one only with more advantage. A part of the fleet having doubled Long Island appeared in the Sound, a gulf of great breadth which separates this island from the coast of Connecticut, and communicates with the East river, by means of a narrow channel, which a very dangerous navigation and frequent shipwrecks have caused to receive the name of *Hell-Gate*.

The English had taken possession of the island of *Montesoro*, situated in this strait, where they had erected a battery to answer that which the Americans had planted upon the opposite side of the river at *Hovenshook*. Two frigates, passing between Governor's Island and the point of *Red-Hook*, had ascended into the East river, without receiving any injury from the artillery of the enemy, and had anchored out of its reach near a little island. The main body of the English fleet was moored in the waters of Governor's Island, ready to attack the city of New York itself, or to enter either the East river, or the Hudson.

Meanwhile the ships were continually engaged with the batteries on shore, and frequent actions ensued for the possession of the little islands which are found in the first of these rivers. The English had need of them for the execution of their projects, and the Americans saw the necessity of defending them. But whether the English artillery was better served, or that the soldiers of this nation had acquired more confidence from their victory, and especially owing to the assistance of their ships, they succeeded in carrying, one after another, such of these islands, as their

convenience required, and thus secured for themselves the entrance of the East river.

Washington had furnished the two shores of the island of New York with a numerous artillery, and had thrown up intrenchments in different places. He had four thousand five hundred men in the city; six thousand five hundred at Harlem, a village situated in front of the opening of the sound; and twelve thousand at Kingsbridge, at the extremity of the island. He had been particularly careful to fortify this passage, in order to secure a free communication with the continent, and to prevent the enemy from seizing it by surprise, and thus entirely locking up the American army within the island itself. But the commander-in-chief felt extreme apprehensions for the city, and began to despair of preserving it in the power of the confederation. The enemy being considerably re-enforced in the northern parts of Long Island, and having the command of the sound, it was to be feared he might disembark in the centre of the island of New York, near the mouth of the sound, in which case the garrison of the city, and all the troops encamped in its environs, having their retreat intercepted, would have been compelled to surrender; or else that, traversing the sound and Morrisania, he would go and establish himself with the greater part of his army in the rear of Kingsbridge.

In this last hypothesis the Americans, losing all communication with the continent, would be forced either to capitulate, or to fight a battle whose success appeared secured in advance to the English by the choice of ground and of time, and the discour-

agement which still prevailed among the troops of the Congress.

The fortune of the Americans would then be past all hope, as well in consequence of the terror with which they would be seized, as from the loss of arms, of munitions, and of baggage. Washington had, therefore, signified to Congress his apprehensions, praying them to inform him of their intentions relative to the city of New York, if he found himself constrained to evacuate it. The Congress humanely replied, that it should be left entire and safe. Having afterwards assembled a council of war, he invited them to deliberate upon the necessity of an immediate evacuation of the city, and it evidently appeared that he was himself in favour of this measure. Some were of the same opinion for the reasons abovementioned, in which they were confirmed by another consideration; they calculated, that by retiring further into the country, the English would be deprived of the important advantage they derived from the co-operation of their fleets. Other members of the council manifested a contrary sentiment, because they considered that the defence of New York would cause the enemy to consume time, and that, in the meanwhile, the season for military operations would have elapsed. They also thought that the evacuation of New York would have too much the appearance of cowardice, and that it might have the most fatal influence upon the spirit of the soldiers and of the inhabitants: the opinion of these prevailed. But at length the English having re-enforced themselves greatly at the entrance of the sound, and in the islands of *Montesoro* and of *Buchanan*, a second council of war decided that it was not only



prudent but even necessary to abandon New York. Accordingly, no time was lost in removing, by way of the Hudson river, the sick, the baggage, and the munitions, which were landed far above, upon the shore of New Jersey. Some days after the garrison marched out of the city, leaving it entirely in the power of the enemy.

While this evacuation was effected with great order on the part of the troops, but with much terror on the part of the inhabitants, a report was suddenly spread that the enemy had landed in the island. The soldiers hastened to make their junction with those stationed at Harlem.

While some of the English ships had entered the Hudson river, in order to draw the attention of the American generals on that side, and to interrupt the transportation of baggage and munitions, the first division of the British army, commanded by general Clinton, had embarked at the head of the bay of Newtown, and proceeding by the sound, entered the East river through Hellgate; thence descending with the current, it had gone to disembark at Kipps Bay, three miles north of New York. This point was the weakest of all; and the English troops, protected by the fire of the ships, effected a landing there almost without resistance. When Washington was apprized of the debarkation, he detached the brigades of generals Parsons and Fellows to re-enforce the corps that defended Kipps Bay. But they had already turned their backs; the others imitated them and shamefully fled, in defiance of the efforts of their officers to retain them. Washington arrived himself and rallied them; but at sight of the English troops these militia disbanded



anew. If the English had immediately pressed forward they would, without any doubt, have intercepted the retreat of the garrison of New York. But whether their generals could not credit so much pusillanimity on the part of the Americans, and were unwilling to risk themselves between two fires; or whether, as some writers assert, being elated with their success, they halted for the space of full two hours to divert themselves in the house of a gentlewoman of the country, it is certain that they gave time to general Putnam, who commanded the garrison, to defile and to rejoin the rest of the army. The Americans, however, left in the power of the enemy their heavy artillery, a great proportion of their baggage and munitions, and particularly their tents, of which they had the greatest need. They lost but few soldiers, and those in a skirmish near Bloomingdale.

The British army having despatched a strong detachment to take possession of the city of New York, which affords accommodation for a considerable garrison, went to encamp in the centre of the island, its right wing being posted at Horen's Hook, upon the East river, and its left at Bloomingdale, upon the Hudson. It thus occupied the entire breadth of the island, from one shore to the other, which in this place is more than a mile. The Americans were strongly intrenched in the northern part of the island, and especially at Kingsbridge: they had, besides, a position upon the heights of Harlem, distant only a mile and a half from the English out-posts. They occupied another difficult passage between Harlem and Kingsbridge, as well as the fort they had named Washington, upon the left bank of the Hudson.

There resulted, from the respective situation of the armies, frequent rencounters, in which the Americans gradually resumed courage, and accustomed themselves anew to look the enemy in the face. Washington ardently desired that his troops should often have these affairs with the English. Among others, there ensued one very hot action in the plain of Harlem, where some corps of English and Hessians, led on too far by their ardour, fell into an ambuscade which the Americans had laid for them, and were handled very roughly. Washington, in his official letters, highly commended the valour displayed by his troops on this occasion.

A few days after the important position of New York was come into the power of the royal troops, there broke out in it a conflagration which some attributed to the malice of certain individuals among the inhabitants themselves, to deprive the English of the resources offered them by this great city; others merely to chance. It was published at the time, that the fire had been kindled in various places at once, by means of combustibles disposed with great dexterity; but the Americans positively denied it. Such was the rapidity of the flames, the wind being violent and the weather very dry, that notwithstanding the speed and activity with which the garrison exerted themselves, a fourth part of the city was consumed. In the fury which transported them, they seized several of those whom they considered as the authors of this disaster, and precipitated them into the midst of the fire.

The English general, perceiving that the strength of the enemy's intrenchments was such as to render

the attempt to dislodge him by an attack, both extremely hazardous and of doubtful success, took the resolution which, perhaps, he should have taken at first, that is, to go and encamp behind the position which the Americans occupied at Kingsbridge, and thus compel him to combat with disadvantage, or to retire with loss, or to remain with peril. Accordingly, having left Lord Percy with two English brigades, and one of Hessians in the encampment of Harlem, for the protection of New York, he embarked with the rest of the army in flat-bottomed boats; and having safely entered the Sound through Hell-Gate, proceeded to disembark at Frogs Neck, in the vicinity of West Chester, upon the confines of New York and Connecticut.

This movement of general Howe has been the object of some criticisms: it was pretended that the Americans might have overwhelmed by a sudden attack the corps left at Harlem, and thus recovered possession of New York. But, perhaps, he founded the success of his operation upon the discouragement of the colonial troops, and upon the presence of the fleet, which in any event could afford a shelter to the corps of Harlem, if they should find themselves too hard pressed. General Howe had also strongly fortified Gowans-Hill, in order to cover the city. Then, with a view to prevent the enemy from receiving provisions from New Jersey by means of the Hudson river, he had ordered three frigates to pass up the river above forts Washington and Lee; the first situated upon the left bank, and the second upon the right. This order was executed with extreme ability, notwithstanding the artillery of the two forts, and

the obstructions with which the Americans had endeavoured to impede the navigation.

The English general remained several days at Frogs Neck, as well to repair the bridges which the enemy had broken, as to wait for a considerable reinforcement which he had called from Staten Island. The road from Frogsneck to Kingsbridge is excessively rough with continual masses of small stones, and the Americans had also obstructed it in many places. Washington, who had assembled all his army at Kingsbridge, sent forward his light infantry to scour the country, and to harass the enemy in his march.

General Howe, having received his re-enforcements, put himself in motion with all his troops; he crossed Pelham Manor, and went to encamp at New Rochelle, where he was joined by the second division of Hessians, and of the troops of Waldeck under general Knyphausen, and by a regiment of cavalry lately arrived at New York from Ireland. As the principal object of the expedition was to intercept the communication of Washington with the eastern provinces, and then, if he declined to venture an engagement, to shut him up in the island of New York, consequently it was necessary to occupy the two roads leading into Connecticut; the one upon the coast of the sound, and the other more inland. The first was already in the power of the English; but in attempting to occupy the second, it was requisite to traverse the difficult country of which we have already made mention, in order to secure the post of the highlands, known by the name of White Plains, upon the rear of Kingsbridge. General Howe determined to take



this route; he marched, however, slowly and with extreme caution, after leaving at New Rochelle the German corps, lately arrived, to secure the lower road, and the communication with those places whence stores and necessaries were to arrive.

Washington examined, with attention, the danger of his position. He penetrated the designs of the enemy, and consequently decided to abandon, with the main body of his army, the encampment of Kingsbridge. Extending, therefore, his left wing, he took post with it in the White Plains, while the right occupied the heights of Valentine's Hill, near Kingsbridge: the centre exactly filled the space comprehended between these two points. Here he intrenched himself with the greatest care. His army thus formed a well secured line, parallel to the river Brunx, which lay on its front, and separated it from the English, who marched up along the left bank of this stream.

Washington had behind him the great river Hudson, into which the English frigates had not yet been able to penetrate so far as to intercept the supplies of provisions which he received from the upper parts. With his left wing he occupied the upper road of Connecticut, by which he was also abundantly supplied with provisions and munitions. He had left sufficient garrisons at Kingsbridge, at Harlem, and in Fort Washington; in this last place, however, against his own opinion. Meanwhile he detached numerous parties over the Brunx, in order to retard the motions of the enemy. Hence frequent skirmishes ensued, and though the royalists had generally the advantage in these rencounters, they still served to dissipate the



terror of the Americans, who every day showed themselves more bold in defying the enemy.

Upon the approach of the English to the White Plains, Washington, all at once, called in his detachments, and abandoning the positions he had occupied along the Brunx, assembled all his troops in a strong camp upon the heights, near these plains, in front of the enemy. His right flank was protected by the Brunx, which, by its windings, also covered the front of the right wing. The main body was nearly parallel to the river, and the left wing being placed at a right angle upon the centre, and consequently parallel to the right, extended towards the north upon the hills, as much as was necessary to guard the defiles leading to the upper mountainous regions, into which the army, if expedient, might retire. But the right wing, being posted in more level and less difficult ground, found itself more exposed, wherefore general Macdougall was ordered to occupy, with a strong detachment, a mountain about a mile distant from the camp; he intrenched himself there as well as the time would admit of.

Such was the position of the American army when the English arrived within seven or eight miles of White Plains, and prepared themselves to attack without loss of time. On the morning of the twenty-eighth of October, they advanced in two columns, the right commanded by general Clinton, and the left by general Heister. At noon, all the out-posts being driven back by the English and Hessian light infantry, the British army appeared before the American camp. Immediately there ensued a cannonade, but to very little effect. The English drew up in order of battle:

their right occupied the road which leads to Merri-neck, about a mile distant from the centre of the enemy; while the left, equally distant from his right, bordered the Brunx. The English general having observed the importance of the position taken by general Macdougall, and being persuaded that the right of the enemy, which was his only assailable point, could not be forced so long as it should be protected by a post of such strength, resolved to wrest it from the Americans. He ordered a Hessian regiment, commanded by colonel Ralle, to ford the Brunx, and by a circuitous movement to fall upon the flank of general Macdougall, while general Leslie should attack him in front with a brigade of English and Hessians. Colonel Ralle having arrived at the point indicated, Leslie, who had also crossed the Brunx, furiously assaulted the intrenchments of Macdougall. The militia soon fled, but the regular troops made a valiant resistance. A regiment of Maryland, conducted by colonel Smallwood, and a regiment of New York, under colonel Ratzemar, ventured even to come out of the lines and to charge the enemy at the very foot of the mountain, but they were overpowered by number and forced to retire. Then the English and Hessians ascended the heights with singular intrepidity, and took possession of them after a vigorous struggle. The Americans, however, continued for some time to fire from behind the walls of enclosures, and thus retarded the progress of the assailants. But general Putnam, who had been sent to their succour, could not arrive in season. The loss of men in this action was great on the one part as well as on the other.

Washington, calmly expecting that the enemy would come to attack him next, had already sent into his rear the sick and the baggage; but as it grew towards the close of day, the English general determined to defer the assault till the next morning. He caused his troops to encamp within cannon shot of the American lines. Washington took advantage of the night to strengthen them with additional works, and to occupy a stronger position in the rear with his left wing, which, by the loss of the mountain, had become more exposed. When the light appeared, general Howe reconnoitred the intrenchments of the enemy, and found them sufficiently formidable to determine him to wait the arrival of some battalions that had been left at New York, under the command of Lord Percy, and of several companies from Merrineck. These re-enforcements being received on the evening of the thirtieth, he appointed the following morning for the assault, but the excessive rain which fell during the night and also in the morning, compelled him to defer it. The American general, in the meantime, examined his position with his accustomed prudence; he was decided not to risk a pitched battle without the strongest hope of success. He perceived that the English had already erected four or five batteries, and that by turning his right flank they might get possession of the heights situated upon his rear. He concluded, therefore, to break up his camp in the night of the first of November. He removed it into a country still more mountainous in the vicinity of North Castle; having previously set fire to the houses in White Plains and the neighbourhood, and to the forage that was found in the camp. He imme-

diately detached a strong corps to occupy the bridge over the Croton river, which leads to the upper parts of the Hudson. On the following morning the English took possession of the American camp.

General Howe, perceiving that his enemy declined an engagement, and that from the situation of the country, and his knowledge of every advantageous position, it would be impossible to compel him to fight but upon the most unequal and hazardous terms, took the determination to discontinue the pursuit, and to turn his attention to the reduction of the forts and fastnesses still occupied by the Americans in the neighbourhood of New York. His views were particularly directed upon fort Washington, which was its principal bulwark. But, though the ground where this fortress had been erected was very rough and difficult, its fortifications were not sufficiently strong to resist heavy artillery. It was incapable, from its little extent, of containing more than a thousand defenders: the outworks that surrounded it, especially to the south, towards New York, might lodge, it is true, a much stronger garrison.

The commander-in-chief, as if he had foreseen the event, had written to general Greene, who commanded in this part, enjoining him to reflect maturely upon his position, and in case he should find that fort Washington was not in a situation to sustain an assault, to cause it to be forthwith evacuated; and to transport the garrison to the right bank of the Hudson. But this general, either believing that the strength of the place and the valour of the troops would assure him a long defence, or from the apprehension that his retreat would increase the already too general dis-



couragement of the Americans, took the resolution to hold out to the last. He was herein the more easily determined, as he believed that the garrison would always be able to retreat into fort Lee, situated upon the other bank of the river. But Washington judged less favourably of the future: he was persuaded that the English would not remain satisfied with the reduction of the first fort; but that crossing the river, and making themselves masters of the second, which was not tenable, they would spread themselves in the province of New Jersey. He left therefore general Lee, with the militia of the eastern provinces, upon the left bank of the Hudson, and having secured the strong positions towards the Croton river, and especially that of Peek's-Kill, near the Hudson itself, he crossed that river with the main body of his army, and went to rejoin general Greene in his camp under fort Lee. General Lee himself had orders to come with all speed and join him, in case the enemy, after having taken the forts, should show himself upon the right bank of the Hudson. He afterwards wrote to the governor of New Jersey, requesting him to remove the magazines of provisions into the most remote parts, and to call out all the militia. All these dispositions being made to his wish, Washington watched with an attentive eye the movements of the enemy.

Meanwhile general Howe had ordered general Knyphausen to march from New Rochelle, and to occupy Kingsbridge. This he executed without obstacles, the Americans, who guarded this position, having fallen back upon fort Washington. The corps of general Knyphausen consequently penetrated into

the island of New York, and proceeded to invest the fort, on the part of the north.

A short time after the English general himself abandoned the White Plains, and descending along the banks of the Hudson, conducted the rest of the army to Kingsbridge. He pitched his camp upon the heights of Fordham, his right wing being covered by the Hudson, and his left by the Brunx.

The royalists then prepared to attack fort Washington: its interior and appertenances were defended by full three thousand men, under the command of colonel Magaw, a brave and experienced officer. He was summoned in vain to surrender. The besiegers proceeded to the assault in four divisions, the first from the north, commanded by general Knyphausen, and consisting of Hessians and the troops of Waldeck; the second from the east, composed of English light infantry and two battalions of guards, conducted by general Matthews. This corps was to attack the intrenchments which extended from fort Washington almost to the East river: the third, commanded by colonel Sterling, was destined to pass this river lower down than the second, in order to assail the fort more to the south; but this was only a feint. The fourth, which obeyed the orders of Lord Percy, a very strong corps, was directed to aim its assault against the western flank of the fortress. These different divisions were provided with a numerous and excellent artillery. The Hessians, under general Knyphausen, were to pass through a very thick forest, where colonel Rawlings was already posted with his regiment of riflemen. An extremely warm affair was engaged, in which the Germans sustained a severe loss. The

Americans ambushed behind the trees and rocks, fired in security; but at last, the Hessians redoubling their efforts, gained a very steep ascent, whence they came down upon the enemy with an irresistible impetuosity; the divisions which followed them were thus enabled to land without molestation. Colonel Rawlings retreated under the cannon of the fort. Lord Percy, on his part, had carried an advanced work, which facilitated the debarkation of the party under colonel Sterling, who, the moment he had landed, forced his way up a difficult height, which was very resolutely defended: he gained the summit, where he took a considerable number of prisoners, notwithstanding their gallant resistance. Colonel Cadwallader, who was charged with the defence of this part, retired also into the fort.

Colonel Ralle, who led the right column of general Knyphausen's attack, surmounted all obstacles with admirable valour, and lodged his column within one hundred yards of the fort. Soon after general Knyphausen joined him with the left column: having at length extricated himself from the difficulties encountered in the forest. The garrison having thus lost, though not without glory, all their advanced works, found themselves closely invested within the body of the fortress. The besiegers, then summoned colonel Magaw to surrender. He had already consumed nearly all his ammunition. The very multitude of defenders pressed into so narrow a space, was prejudicial to defence, and every thing demonstrated that he could not sustain an assault. Accordingly he decided to capitulate. The garrison, amounting to two thousand six hundred men, inclusive of the country mili-

tia, surrendered prisoners of war. The Americans had few killed; the royalists lost about eight hundred, the greater part Germans.

The reduction of fort Washington thus gave the royal army entire possession of the island of New York.

Wishing to avail himself to the utmost of the defeat of the Americans, and to prevent them from rallying at another point, general Howe confided to Lord Cornwallis the command of a corps of about six thousand men, directing him to pass the Hudson at Dobb's ferry, and forthwith to invest fort Lee, in order, if possible, to surprise the garrison, which consisted in two thousand men. They had scarcely time to save themselves by abandoning the place, the moment they heard of the surrender of fort Washington, of the passage of the enemy, and of his force. Their artillery and military stores, their baggage, and particularly their tents, a loss the most sensible, fell into the power of the victors. The vanquished retired to the other side of the Hackensack. The British could now penetrate into the very heart of New Jersey.

These successive checks, the loss of the two forts, Washington and Lee, and especially the excessive vigour of the attack, which had constrained the first to surrender, produced a deplorable change in the fortune of the Americans. They beheld all at once what the fatal battle of Brooklyn had not been able to operate; the dissolution of their army.

The militia disbanded and precipitately retired to their habitations; even the regular troops, as if struck with despair, also filed off, and deserted in parties.



Every thing at this period of the war, threatened America with an inevitable catastrophe.

The army of Washington was so enfeebled that it scarcely amounted to three thousand men, who had lost all courage and all energy, and were exposed in an open country, without instruments to intrench themselves, without tents to shelter them from the inclemency of the season, and in the midst of a population little zealous, or rather hostile towards the republic.

The general of Congress had to face a victorious army, more than twenty thousand strong, composed entirely of disciplined and veteran troops. The excellent generals who commanded it, using the ardour inspired by victory, pursued their advantages with vivacity, and flattered themselves that a few days would suffice to crush the wrecks of the republican army, and put an end to the war. To all the difficulties against which Washington had to contend, should be added that the English cavalry, though without being very numerous, scoured all the flat country, whereas he had nothing to oppose to it except a few diminutive and feeble hackneys from Connecticut, commanded by major Sheldon. So total a deficiency of cavalry, in the immense plains of this country, appeared to extinguish for the Americans their little chance of success. They were no better provided with artillery than with horses. The greater part of their feeble army consisted in militia, almost all from New Jersey. These were either of suspicious fidelity, or desirous of returning to their habitations, to rescue their property and families from the perils that menaced them. The few regular soldiers who still

remained with their colours, completed their term of service with the expiration of the year: it was therefore to be feared that this phantom of an army would vanish entirely in the space of a few days.

In so profound a distress, the American general could not hope to receive prompt or sufficient reinforcements. Consternation reigned in all the contiguous provinces; so that each, trembling for himself, refused to succour others. There still remained a few regiments of regular troops upon the frontiers of Canada; but they were necessary there to arrest the progress of the enemy; and, besides, the term of engagement was about to dissolve them shortly. Upon the heel of so many disasters was the imminent danger of seditions on the part of the disaffected, who in various places loudly invoked the name of England. An insurrection appeared ready to explode in the county of Monmouth, in this very province of New Jersey, so that Washington found himself constrained to detach a part of his army, already a mere skeleton, to overawe the agitators. The presence of a victorious royal army had dissipated the terror with which the patriots at first had inspired the loyalists. They began to abandon themselves without reserve to all the fury which animated them against their adversaries. The English commissioners determined to avail themselves of this disposition of the inhabitants to revolt against the authority of Congress. Accordingly the two brothers Howe drew up a proclamation, which they circulated profusely throughout the country. They commanded all those who had arms in hand to disperse and return to their habitations; and all those who exercised civil magistracies to cease their func-

tions and divest themselves of their usurped authority. But at the same time, they offered a full pardon to all such as within the space of sixty days should present themselves before the civil or military officers of the crown, declaring their intention to take the benefit of the amnesty, and promising a sincere return to the obedience due to the laws and to the royal authority. This proclamation had the effect which the commissioners had promised themselves from it. A multitude of persons of every rank, availing themselves of the clemency of the victor, came daily to implore his forgiveness, and to protest their submission.

It was remarked, however, that they belonged for the greater part to the class of the very poor, or of the very rich. The inhabitants of a middle condition manifested more constancy in their opinions. Several of the newly reconciled had occupied the first stations in the popular order of things; they had been members either of the provincial government, or of the council of general safety, or of the tribunals of justice. They excused themselves by saying that they had only acted, in what they had hitherto done, with a view to promote the public welfare, and to prevent greater disorders; they alleged, finally, that they had been drawn in by their parents and friends, whom they were unable to refuse. Those who had contemplated them in all their arrogance, and who saw them then so meek, so submissive, and so humble in their words, could scarcely persuade themselves that they were indeed the same individuals. But men of this stamp dread much less to be considered inconstant and perfidious, than rebels to the laws of the strongest; they much prefer to escape danger with infamy, than to

encounter it with honour. Nor was it only in New Jersey, and in the midst of the victorious royal troops, that these abrupt changes of party were observed: the inhabitants of Pennsylvania flocked in like manner to humble themselves at the feet of the English commissioners, and to promise them fealty and obedience. Among others there came the Galloways, the family of the Allens, and some others of the most wealthy and reputable. The example became pernicious, and the most prejudicial effects were to be apprehended from it. Every day ushered in some new calamity; the cause of America seemed hastening to irretrievable ruin. The most discreet no longer dissembled that the term of the war was at hand; and that the hour was come in which the colonies were about to resume the yoke. But Washington, in the midst of so much adversity, did not despair of the public safety. His constancy was an object of admiration. Far from betraying any symptoms of hesitation or of fear, he showed himself to his dejected soldiers with a serene countenance, and radiant, as it were, with a certain hope of a better future. Adverse fortune had not been able to vanquish, nay, not even to shake this invincible spirit. Firmly resolved to pursue their object through every fortune, the Congress manifested a similar constancy. It appeared as if the spirit of these great minds increased with adversity.

America is assuredly indebted to the magnanimity of her chiefs for the victory and independence which have crowned her efforts.

Thus pressed by time and circumstances, Washington took all the measures suggested by prudence in order to re-enforce his army, not with the hope of



being able to arrest the enemy in his triumphant march, but at least that he might not appear to have entirely abandoned the republic; and finally, to keep his standard waving till Divine Providence, or the benignity of fortune, should offer him an occasion to retrieve the affairs of his country.

He had some time before, as we have already related, directed general Lee to occupy, with a part of the army, the country watered by the Upper Hudson, in order to be at hand to succour the corps of Canada which opposed general Carleton upon the lakes. But on seeing New Jersey unguarded, and the danger which instantly menaced the city of Philadelphia itself, he ordered him to come, by forced marches, to rejoin him. This order was the more easy to be executed, as it was soon known that general Carleton, after having occupied Crown Point and made himself master of Lake Champlain, as will be seen in the course of this history, had retired without having ventured to attack Ticonderoga. The commander-in-chief, therefore, instructed general Schuyler to send him, without delay, the troops of Pennsylvania and of New Jersey, that were upon the frontiers of Canada. General Mercer, who commanded a corps of light infantry at Berghen, likewise received orders to rejoin the principal army with all speed. Little calculation, however, could be made upon these re-enforcements in the present state of things; the march was long, the road difficult, the engagement of the soldiers almost expired, and the victorious enemy menaced upon all points at once. The American general neglected not to resort to the succours of the militia. He had represented to the principal authorities of Pennsylvania

the critical situation of Philadelphia, which could not be saved unless his army was promptly re-enforced; he therefore earnestly pressed them to send him the militia of the province. Washington finding his letters nearly without effect, despatched general Mifflin, who enjoyed great popular favour in this province, to paint, with vivid colouring, the urgency of the danger, and the necessity of a general effort to avert it. He wrote also to the governor of New Jersey, apprizing him that unless he assembled the militia and caused them to join the army immediately, he must expect to see the enemy over-run the entire province as a conqueror, pass the Delaware and seize Philadelphia.

All his efforts were equally ineffectual in this part. The lower districts of the province, either wanting zeal or chilled with terror, made no movement; and it was not without a sort of repugnance that the inhabitants of the upper countries took arms for the defence of country.

Reduced to the uncertain hope of these feeble re-enforcements, the Americans saw their enemies redoubling activity to render their triumph more complete. The army of Congress, after its retreat, had the Hackensack upon its front; but this narrow stream could not be considered as a sufficient defence against the keen pursuit of the English. Besides, as the Passaick flowed at no great distance in the rear of Washington, and the light troops of the enemy inundated the country, he ran the risk of being locked in between these two rivers. He therefore crossed the Passaick over the bridge of Aquakannunk, and took up his quarters at Newark, upon the right bank. The English immediately also passed the Hackensack, and

over-ran the country up to the Passaick. Washington seeing Lord Cornwallis approach with rapidity, abandoned the borders of this river, and retiring behind the Rariton took post at New Brunswick. Here the troops of Maryland and of New Jersey declared their term of engagement was expired, and deserting the rest of the army, retired to their respective homes. Some corps of the Pennsylvania militia followed this example; and the army, already so feeble, found itself upon the point of ceasing to exist. The English showed themselves every where, and always equally animated.

Washington, with the few regiments he had left, ventured to make some demonstrations as if he intended to resume the offensive; but this manœuvre was, in fact, designed to cover his retreat to Trenton, upon the left bank of the Delaware. Lord Sterling was left at Princeton, with twelve hundred men, to observe the motions of the enemy. Having little hope of being able to maintain even this position long, he sent across the river the sick, the baggage, and the munitions, and caused all the boats to be withdrawn to the opposite bank, that the English might not use them to effect their passage. He determined, however, to remain upon the frontiers of New Jersey, in order to be always at hand to retard the progress of the enemy. At length having received a re-enforcement of two thousand men, composed of the armed citizens of Philadelphia, and of the German battalion already mentioned, he pressed forward with the intention of returning to Princeton. But upon the rumour, continually increasing, that Lord Cornwallis was on his march from New Brunswick with a formidable

force, divided in several columns so as to endanger his communications with the river, he retreated anew, and the eighth of December, leaving the frontiers of New Jersey entirely in the power of the enemy, he withdrew upon the right bank of the Delaware, having first, however, cut the bridges, broken the roads, and removed all the ferry-boats. Scarcely had the rear-guard gained the right bank when the English light troops began to appear upon the left; but finding no means to cross the river they could pursue no further.

The river Delaware was now the last defence that remained to the American troops; if the English could pass it, they infallibly became masters of Philadelphia. And the acquisition of a city of such importance, which was at once the capital of the confederation, the seat of government, as well as of the principal authorities, and the central repository of military stores and provisions, must have produced such an effect upon the minds of the people, as perhaps would have given the English a complete triumph, or at least would have authorized them to expect a prompt termination of the war in their favour.

But Lord Cornwallis, following the orders of general Howe, who did not proceed in this operation with the requisite ardour, had remained too long at New Brunswick; he thus left Washington at liberty to interpose every obstacle to the passage of the river. It is impossible here not to blame the negligence of the English generals, who had not seasonably collected all the materials for laying bridges, and who even never thought of constructing rafts in order to gain the other bank. They might have done it in these



first moments. Perhaps, no longer doubting of the certain success of their arms, they imagined they could pass the river whenever they pleased, and that Philadelphia would immediately open its gates to them. A memorable example, which proves that in war, more than in any other circumstance of life, it should never be thought that all is done, while there still remains something to do! It is perfectly certain that this unexpected delay of the English operated to their prejudice through the whole course of the war, and that it was to this capital fault the Americans owed their safety.

The English general established his head-quarters at Trenton, extending his two wings, above and below, along the left bank of the Delaware. This river, after having run from north-west to south-east till it reaches Bordentown, there makes a sudden bend, and flows to the south-west towards Philadelphia; if the the English, therefore, had passed it above Trenton, at a place called *Coriell's Ferry*, or in its vicinity, they would have found themselves as near to this capital as the Americans themselves, who guarded the banks of the Delaware opposite Trenton. That they had formed this design is demonstrated by the attempt they made to seize certain boats at *Coriell's Ferry*, which, however, was defeated by the vigilance of Lord Sterling. To oppose an obstacle to this passage, the commander-in-chief directed general Putnam, an engineer of great ability, to draw lines from the Schuylkill to the heights of Springatsburgh. But as the enemy had repaired the bridges below Trenton, and the corps he had at Bordentown were daily re-enforced, the Americans became apprehensive that

he would attempt to pass the river at once above them at Coriell's Ferry and below them at Burlington; which would have enabled him to close upon their rear, and thus to shut up their whole army in the point of land formed by the flexure of the Delaware. To obviate this danger, Washington stationed his galleys in places the most proper to observe the motions of the English, and to repulse them if they attempted the passage. The upper parts being the most menaced, he detached his best troops to guard them. Redoubts were erected from distance to distance, and furnished with artillery. Finally, the order was given, in case of misfortune, and if the enemy passed the river, that all the troops should fall back upon Germantown, a large village, but a few miles distant from Philadelphia.

The English generals seeing the enemy's preparations of defence, and perhaps hoping to be able to pass the Delaware in safety, when it should be frozen, which, as the season was now advanced, might be expected very shortly; instead of following the Americans in their retreat, and of allowing them no time to rally, distributed their troops in winter quarters. Four thousand men took their lodgings upon the very bank of the river, at Trenton, at Bordenton, at Blackhorse and at Burlington. Strong detachments occupied Princeton and New Brunswick, where were found their magazines of provisions and of munitions. The rest of the troops were cantoned about in the villages of New Jersey.

While the English army was thus arrested upon the banks of the Delaware, either by the negligence or presumption of its chiefs, or by the firmness and prudence of Washington, this general omitted no

exertions to re-enforce his army with militia, as well as with regular troops.

Generals Mifflin and Armstrong, who both enjoyed a great influence in Pennsylvania, went through the province, exhorting the people to take arms and fly to the defence of the capital, and of the country. Their exhortations and the approach of danger produced the desired effect. Many of the inhabitants repaired to the republican standard, though without manifesting all of them a very ardent zeal. That the regular troops might serve as a nucleus, for the militia to rally about, Washington ordered general Gates to bring him promptly the best of the troops he commanded in Canada, after having posted the militia of New England to guard the most important passes. Gates arrived the twentieth of December at the army of Pennsylvania. General Lee had received the same order; but he executed it with great slowness and a sort of repugnance, whether his ambition led him to prefer the command of a separate army, or that he considered it as more adviseable to maintain himself in the upper and mountainous parts of New Jersey, in order to be always ready to annoy the right flank of the British army. He was drawn from this languor by an event which threw him into a painful captivity, and which filled all America with profound regret, where his zeal, his intelligence, and his military skill, were held in the highest consideration.

Being at a place called Baskinbridge, distant about twenty miles from the quarters of the enemy, he thought himself so out of all danger that he neglected the usual precautions. He took up his quarters at a house considerably removed from the main body,

where he remained with a slender guard. Colonel Harcourt, who scoured the country with his cavalry, was informed of this circumstance by a loyalist, and immediately galloped towards the place where Lee was so incautiously lodged. The colonel appearing suddenly, secured the sentinels without noise, and darting into the house, arrested the general. He caused him immediately to mount a very swift horse, and with the same promptness and good fortune conducted him prisoner to New York. This news spread as much consternation among the Americans, as alacrity among the English; who boasted that they had seized the *Palladium* of America. This capture of general Lee occasioned transports of joy even at the court of Saint James, as if some great victory had been obtained, or as if this incident was more fortunate than the conquest of New Jersey itself, and the fair prospect opened of soon entering the city of Philadelphia. From this time there arose a violent controversy between the chiefs of the two parties, relative to the manner in which general Lee and the other prisoners of war should be treated. General Gage, when he was invested with the command, had always refused to consent to the exchange of prisoners. There resulted from it a deplorable system of cruelty on the one part as well as on the other. But when general Howe appeared at the head of the British army, either because his character was more humane than that of his predecessor, or that he had received particular instructions from his government, or finally, that he was constrained to it by the great number of English who were fallen into the power of the Americans, he had agreed from time to time to



make exchanges. But when he found himself in possession of general Lee, he refused to fulfil with respect to him the laws of war, and caused him to be closely confined as if he had been a prisoner of state. He advanced as a reason for his conduct, that Lee being invested with the rank of an officer in the English army, he was to be considered as a deserter, and a traitor. He had formerly received, it is true, his half-pay as a British officer; but upon the breaking out of hostilities, he had resigned his rank in England, to be at liberty to enter the service of America. But this resignation had not perhaps arrived seasonably; or the hatred borne him by the government and British generals having more power over them than the usage of civilized nations, they affected to consider and treat him rather as a prisoner of state than as a prisoner of war. As Washington had no British officer in his power of equal rank with general Lee, he had proposed to general Howe to give six Hessian officers in exchange for him, adding that in case this offer should not be accepted, he demanded at least that Lee should be treated in a manner suitable to his rank, and this not only in conformity with the laws of nations, but also in reciprocity for the good treatment which the English officers that were prisoners received on the part of the Americans. General Howe persisted in his refusal; the Congress then resorted to reprisals. They ordered that lieutenant colonel Campbell and five Hessian officers should be imprisoned and treated as general Lee. This order was executed even with more rigour than it prescribed. The lieutenant colonel, being then at Boston, was thrown into a dungeon destined for male-

factors. Washington blamed this excess: he knew that Lee was detained but not ill treated. He also apprehended reprisals, since there were more Americans in the hands of the English, than English in the hands of the Americans. He wrote with great earnestness to Congress upon this subject, but without effect: lieutenant colonel Campbell and the Hessians were not liberated until general Howe had consented to consider Lee as a prisoner of war.

During these altercations the exchange of prisoners was entirely suspended. Those in the hands of the English at New York had to experience every sort of ill treatment. They were shut up in churches and in other places, exposed to all the inclemency of the air. They were not allowed sufficient nourishment; their fare was scantied even of coarse bread, and certain aliments which excited disgust. The sick were confounded with the healthy, both equally a prey to the most shocking defect of cleanliness, and exposed to the outrages of the soldiers, and especially of the loyalists. Nothing alleviated their sufferings. A confined and impure air engendered mortal diseases: more than fifteen hundred of these unfortunate men perished in a few weeks. It was believed that so much cruelty was purposely exercised with a view of constraining the prisoners to enlist under the royal standard. It is certain, at least, that the officers of the king incessantly exhorted them to it. But they all refused; preferring a certain death to the desertion of their country. The fate of the officers was not much less deplorable. Despoiled of every thing by the rapacity of the English soldiers, they were abandoned to all wants. Some of them, though wounded

and without clothing, were carted through the streets of New York for the sport of the populace. In the midst of hisses and imprecations, they were denominated rebels and traitors. Several were even caned for having attempted to procure some relief for their soldiers, who were perishing with hunger and disease in their infected dungeons. Washington had addressed frequent and bitter complaints to general Howe of this barbarous conduct towards prisoners of war. The English general answered by denials, by excuses, and even by recriminations. But that he was culpable, is proved by his having refused the offer of the American general, who proposed to send an agent to New York to provide for the wants of the prisoners. Hence the hatred between the two people acquired a new degree of violence. At length, those who had survived so many evils, were exchanged, and set at liberty. But such was their miserable condition that many died on the way before they could re-visit their country and all the objects of their affection. There arose new difficulties upon this subject between the two generals; the Englishman insisting that his prisoners should be restored even in exchange for the dead, and the American refusing it. All this affair of prisoners proves but too clearly that in civil wars, friends become worse than natural enemies, and the most civilized nations no better than barbarians. But the greater part of these inhuman excesses are incontestably attributable to the English.

After general Lee had fallen into the hands of the enemy, general Sullivan, who succeeded him, manifested greater promptitude in obeying the orders of Washington. He crossed the Delaware at Phillips-

burgh, and joined him about the last of December: this re-enforcement carried the American army to not far from seven thousand men. But the greater part of these troops completed their engagement with the year, and they were upon the point of a total dissolution.

While the English pursued the relics of the American army through the plains of New Jersey, and the latter, happy in having been able to cross the Delaware, found itself almost without hope, Fortune did not show herself more propitious to the cause of the revolution upon the coasts of Rhode Island. Admiral sir Peter Parker, and general Clinton with four brigades of English as well as Hessians, had undertaken an expedition against this province, on board a numerous squadron. The provincials not expecting this attack, were totally unprepared for defence; they consequently abandoned Rhode Island without resistance to the English, who occupied it the same day that Washington passed the Delaware. This loss was of great importance, as well from the situation of the province as because the American squadron, under commodore Hopkins, was compelled to withdraw as far up the Providence river as it was practicable, and to continue there blocked up and useless for a long time. The English also occupied the two neighbouring islands of Conanicut and of Prudence. Two pieces of cannon fell into their power, but they made few prisoners. The conquest of Rhode Island was of great utility for their ulterior operations: from this province they could harass Massachusetts; and the re-enforcements that general Lincoln had assembled with the intention of conducting them to the army of



Washington, were detained in that province, to observe general Clinton, and prevent him from disturbing its tranquillity. Even Connecticut shared the alarm, and retained the re-enforcements it was upon the point of sending to the camp of the Delaware.

The English, in like manner desirous to prevent the colonies of the south from transmitting succours to those of the middle, which they intended to attack, renewed, during the summer of the present year, their negotiations with the loyalists and with the savages of the upper parts, in order to induce them to act against Georgia, the two Carolinas and Virginia. Notwithstanding the little success which had, in the preceding year, attended the enterprises of the *Regulators* and of the Scotch emigrants, the English agents, and particularly one Stuart, a man of extreme activity and audacity, flattered themselves with the hope of obtaining a more efficacious co-operation on the part of the Indian tribes. They were as lavish of exhortations and promises as of gold and of presents. They gave out that a strong corps of English would disembark in West Florida; that traversing the territory of the Creeks, the Chickasaws, and the Cherokees, they would join with the warriors of these nations, and invade the two Carolinas and Virginia; while, at the same time, a numerous fleet and powerful army should attack the coasts. Stuart addressed circulars to the loyalists, inviting them to come and put themselves under the royal standard, erected in the country of the Cherokees: he urged them to bring with them their horses, their cattle, and provisions of every sort, for which they should be paid a liberal price. The loyalists, who remembered

too well their recent defeat, made no movement of importance. But the Indians, excited by the words and presents of the emissaries, no less than by the probabilities of success, and their thirst of pillage, assembled in considerable numbers, and manifested great animosity against the colonies. The Six Nations themselves, who till this epoch had observed a strict neutrality, began to waver, and had already committed hostilities upon their borders. The Creeks, still more audacious, took the field, and displayed their accustomed ferocity. But having found that deeds did not correspond with words, and that the promised succours did not appear, they desisted and demanded a pardon, which was easily granted them. They manifested afterwards so much regard for their oaths, or so much distrust for the promises of the English, or finally, such profound terror, that when the Cherokees not long after urged them for succours, they answered that they had buried the hatchet so deep that it could not be found. But the Cherokees listened only to their fury; they fell furiously upon the colonies, exercising frightful ravages, scalping and mutilating their prisoners. They massacred with the same barbarity those who were able to carry arms, and those who were not; old men, women and children, were butchered without discrimination. Their security was increased by the appearance of the fleet under Sir Peter Parker, which had arrived in the waters of Charleston. But when this fleet after the unsuccessful attack of fort Moultrie, had abandoned the shores of Carolina, the Cherokees found themselves in a very critical situation.

Having no longer any thing to fear upon their coasts, the inhabitants of the two Carolinas and of Virginia devoting all their cares to free themselves from this scourge, turned their forces against the savages, who devastated their country. These barbarians were not only defeated in several rencounters, but the Americans pursued them even into their own territory, putting all to fire and sword, burning their habitations, cutting their trees, destroying their corn, and slaying all those who had borne, or still bore arms. This expedition was almost the total ruin of the nation of Cherokees. Those who survived it, submitted to all the conditions of the conqueror, or wanting provisions took refuge with this Stuart, the author of the war and of their disasters, in West Florida, where the British government was forced to support them. Thus terminated this year the campaign against the savages; it may be observed that no chastisement was ever more severe, or more deserved than that which was inflicted upon the nation of the Cherokees. The avaricious and cruel men who excited these barbarians to commit so many horrors, were the more inexcusable inasmuch as they had received their birth and education under the more clement sky of Europe.

But the order of events recalls us to Canada, where military operations, far from being suspended, were pursued with extreme vigour. We have related in the preceding book, that the Americans had been constrained by the superiority of the British arms, to evacuate all Lower Canada, and even Montreal and Fort St. John. They had retired to Crown Point, whither the English were unable to follow them for want of the necessary vessels not only to cross Lake

Champlain, but also to combat those the Americans had armed for their defence. Such, however, was the importance to the designs of the English of obtaining an absolute control of the lakes, that general Carlton set himself with all diligence to the equipment of a fleet. His plan was, according to the instructions of the ministry, to penetrate by way of the lakes to the Hudson river, and thus to effect a junction with the army of New York, at Albany. By the execution of this plan, the provinces of New England would have found themselves separated from the others by a powerful and victorious army, and the cause of America would have been exposed to the most imminent perils. Long deliberated in the councils of the British ministers, it was their favourite scheme. And, in effect, the very nature of the places between Canada and New York, appeared to favour this enterprise. With the exception of the heights which are found between the upper extremity of Lake George and the left bank of the Hudson, and which only occupy a space of sixteen miles, the entire passage from one of these provinces to the other, can easily be made by water, first by ascending from the Saint Lawrence into the Sorel, and then traversing the Lakes Champlain and George, or Wood Creek, to the lands which separate it from the Hudson. This river afterwards leads directly to the city of New York. The English having an immense superiority at sea, Canada being entirely in their power, and as the principal seat of resistance was found in the provinces of New England, while the coasts of New York were peculiarly accessible to maritime attacks, it cannot be denied that this plan of campaign pre-



sented great advantages. But the difficulty of the enterprise of general Carleton was equal to its importance. It was requisite to construct, or at least to equip a fleet of thirty vessels of different dimensions, and to arm them with artillery: the want of materials rendered either of these objects difficult to accomplish. The transportation afterwards in certain places by land, and drawing up the rapids of Saint Theresa and of Saint John, of thirty large long boats, a gondola of thirty tons, a number of flat-bottomed boats of considerable burthen, with above four hundred batteaux, was an operation which offered not only great obstacles, but even an appearance of impossibility. But the English seamen, from their skill and patience, were not intimidated by it. The soldiers seconded them, and the peasants taken from their rustic labours, were compelled to share the toil. The generals urged forward this laborious undertaking on account of the lateness of the season; as the winter already approached. It was necessary to pass two lakes of considerable extent; they had no certain intelligence respecting the force of the enemy in the fortresses of Crown Point and Ticonderoga; finally, after having worsted him upon Lake Champlain, by means of large vessels, it was to be feared that the squadron would not be able to pass the strait which joins this lake to Lake George, into which however it was absolutely necessary that it should enter. Meanwhile, if it should be possible to surmount so many obstacles, there still would remain to be effected the passage of the woods, the marshes, and the defiles which are found between the point of debarkation and the banks of the Hudson, in order to

gain the city of Albany, where only they could meet with such accommodations as would enable them to winter commodiously. But far from appearing discouraged, the English seemed to be animated with new ardour, and the soldiers rivalled their officers in zeal. They felt all the importance of the enterprise, and persuaded themselves that if they could reach Albany before winter, their definitive success would be secured. The brilliant advantages obtained by the army of New Jersey, filled them with emulation; they were eager to share in them, and fearful of arriving too late upon the theatre of glory. They laboured therefore with incredible activity: but notwithstanding all their efforts, the preparations could not be completed, nor the armament fully equipped, till the middle of the month of October. It was numerous and superior in strength to any that had ever been seen upon these lakes, and would have made no contemptible figure even upon the European seas. The admiral's ship, called the *Inflexible*, carried eighteen twelve-pounders, and was followed by two stout schooners, the one mounting fourteen, the other twelve six-pounders; a large flat-bottomed radeau, with six twenty-four and six twelve-pounders. Twenty vessels of less size carried each a brass piece of ordnance, from nine to twenty-four-pounders, or howitzers. Several long boats were equipped in the same manner. Besides these, there was a great number of boats and tenders of various sizes, to serve as transports for the troops, baggage, warlike stores, provisions, and arms of every sort.

The whole fleet was commanded by captain Pringle, a sea-officer of great experience; it was manned

by a select body of seamen, animated with an extreme desire of victory. The land troops encamped in the environs, prepared, as soon as the navigation of the lake should be secured, to fall upon the enemy. Three thousand men occupied Ile-aux-Noix, and as many were stationed at Fort Saint John, the remainder was distributed either in the vessels or in the neighbouring garrisons.

The Americans united all their forces to resist such formidable preparations. Generals Schuyler and Gates were at their head, and Arnold showed himself every where, inspiring the soldiers with that ardent courage for which he was himself distinguished.

As the event of the campaign upon this frontier depended totally upon naval operations, the Americans exerted themselves to the utmost of their power to arm and equip a fleet capable of opposing that of the enemy. But their success little corresponded with their efforts. Besides the want of materials for construction, they had not a sufficiency of other stores, and their sea ports were so occupied in the building of privateers and ships for the service of Congress, that few carpenters could be spared. Accordingly, notwithstanding the activity and perseverance of the American generals, their squadron amounted to no more than fifteen vessels of different sizes, two brigs, one corvette, one sloop, three gallies, and eight gondolas. Their largest vessel mounted only twelve, six, and four pounders. But that this armament might not want a chief whose intrepidity equalled the danger of the enterprise, the command of it was given to general Arnold. It was expected of him to maintain, upon this new element, the reputation he had acquir-

ed upon land. The American army, notwithstanding all the obstacles it had encountered, and the ravages of the small pox, still amounted to eight or nine thousand men: it was assembled under the cannon of Ticonderoga, after having left a sufficient garrison at Crown Point.

All the dispositions being made on both sides, general Carleton, impatient to conquer, ordered all his naval forces to advance towards Crown Point, intending to attack the enemy there. He had already reached the middle of the lake without having been able to discover him, and was proceeding without any distrust, when all at once the English perceived the American squadron, which was drawn up with great skill, behind the Island of Valincour, and occupied the passage between the island and the western shore of the lake. This unexpected interview caused a violent agitation on both sides. A fierce engagement immediately ensued. But the wind being unfavourable to the English, they could not display their whole line: the *Inflexible*, and their other vessels of the largest class, took no part in the action. The brig *Carleton*, accompanied by several gun-boats, assailed the enemy with singular courage and ability. The Americans supported the combat with equal bravery; it lasted above four hours. The wind continuing to be contrary for the English, captain Pringle perceived that he could not hope to obtain advantages with a part of his forces against all those of the enemy, and accordingly gave the signal of retreat; ordering the fleet to be anchored in a line, in presence of the American squadron.



The Americans had lost in the action their largest brig, which took fire and was consumed, as also a gondola which went to the bottom. They considered it as extremely dangerous to await a second engagement in the anchorage they occupied, and consequently determined to retire under the walls of Crown Point, hoping that the artillery of the fortress would counterbalance the superiority of the enemy's force. Fortune seemed inclined to favour this design of general Arnold; and already his vessels, having lost sight of those of the English, sailed rapidly towards their new station; when suddenly the wind became favourable to the enemy, who pursued and came up with them before their arrival at Crown Point. The battle was immediately renewed with greater fury than at first; it continued upwards of two hours. Those vessels in the meanwhile which were most ahead, crowded sail, and passing Crown Point, ran for Ticonderoga. Only two gallies and five gondolas, remained with general Arnold. With these he made a desperate defence; but his second in command, brigadier general Waterburg, being taken with his vessel, and the others making but a faint resistance, he determined, in order to prevent his people and shipping from falling into the power of the enemy, to run these ashore and set them on fire. He executed his intention with great address. He remained on board the vessel he commanded, and kept her colours flying, till she was on fire. Though he had been unsuccessful on this occasion, the disparity of strength duly considered, he lost no reputation, and rose on the contrary in the estimation of his countrymen. He had, in their opinion, acquitted himself with no less

ability in this naval encounter, than he had done at land before. The Americans, having destroyed whatever could not be carried off, evacuated Crown Point and withdrew to Ticonderoga. General Carleton occupied the former immediately, and the rest of his army came soon after to join him there.

Such was the issue of the expedition which the Americans had undertaken in Canada, with a view of establishing the theatre of war upon the territory of their enemies, before they could attempt to invade their own. Completely masters of Lake Champlain, the English had now no other obstacle to surmount besides the fortress of Ticonderoga, in order to penetrate into Lake George. If Carleton, rapidly availing himself of his advantage, had pushed forward against the enemy, thrown into confusion by defeat, perhaps he might have seized this important place without difficulty. But he was prevented from doing it by a south wind, which prevailed for several days. The Americans made the best use of this time in preparing and increasing their means of defence. They mounted their cannon, constructed new works, and repaired the old, surrounding them with moats and palisades. The garrison was re-enforced with extreme expedition; and conformably to the orders of Washington, the oxen and horses were removed into distant places, that the English might not seize them for provision or draught. Meanwhile general Carleton had not neglected to detach scouting parties upon the two banks of the lake; and, when the wind permitted, some light vessels were also sent towards Ticonderoga to reconnoitre the force of the enemy and the state of the fortress. All the reports agreed that the

fortifications were formidable, and the garrison full of ardour. He reflected therefore that the siege must be long, difficult and sanguinary, and he concluded accordingly that the possession of this fortress would not indemnify him for all it might cost. The severe season approached; the want of provisions, the difficulty of direct communications with Canada, and the little hope of success from an expedition in the cold and desert regions which separate the river Hudson from Lake George, rendered the wintering upon this lake extremely perilous. In consequence of these considerations, the English general deemed the reduction of Ticonderoga of little utility in his present circumstances, whereas the command of the lakes secured him a clear passage to return in the spring to the attack of this fortress, without exposing his troops to the hardships of a siege, undertaken in the midst of the rigours of winter. After having taken the advice of a council of war, he renounced the project of an attack, and early in November conducted his army back towards Montreal, leaving his advanced posts in Isle aux Noix. But prior to his retreat, from the singular courtesy and humanity of his character, he sent to their homes the American officers who had fallen into his power, administering generously to all their wants. He exercised the same liberality towards the common soldiers. The greater part were almost naked: he caused them to be completely clothed, and set them at liberty, after having taken their oath that they would not serve against the armies of the king. General Carleton was blamed for having taken winter quarters: this resolution was considered as a mark of weakness, and as highly

prejudicial to the success of ulterior operations: Since if he had immediately made himself master of Ticonderoga, his troops, after having passed the winter in its vicinity, would have been able to enter the field early the following spring. It is probable, in effect, that the war would, in that case, have had a very different result from what it actually had. But the conquest of a place so strong by nature and by art as Ticonderoga, depended on the resistance which the Americans would have made; and certainly their number, the valour they had displayed in the naval actions, the extreme confidence they had in their chiefs, all announced that their defence would have been long and obstinate. Nor should the consideration be omitted of the difficulty of subsistence, and of the communications with Canada. Be this as it may, the retreat of the English general, and his inaction during the winter had the most happy results for the Americans. The army which had made the campaign under general Lee, was enabled to effect its junction with that of Washington, upon the banks of the Delaware; and a part of the army of Canada itself could take the same direction, under the conduct of general Gates.

It cannot be doubted, however, that the Americans at this time trod upon the brink of precipices; a single reverse might have completed their ruin. Two important provinces, New York and Rhode Island, as well as the greater part of New-Jersey, were fallen into the power of the victorious army. And though the arms of Clinton, equally successful, had arrested their course under the walls of Ticonderoga, it was but too probable that on the return of spring he would



make a new effort to carry this fortress, and to penetrate to the banks of the Hudson, in order to operate his junction with the army of New-York. As to Washington, it was not to be expected that, while inferior himself to his adversary, he would be in a situation to send back to the army of Canada the troops that were enabled by the cessation of hostilities upon the lakes, to come to join him upon the Delaware.

Though he had received, as we have seen, some re-enforcements, he was still as far from being able to match the enemy either in the number, spirit, or discipline of his soldiers, as in the quantity and quality of his munitions of every sort. He was also continually subject to that scourge of the American army, desertion, authorized by the expiration of engagements, which incessantly menaced it with an approaching, and almost total dissolution. It was no slight motive of alarm for the most influential members of congress, to remark the promptitude with which the inhabitants of the conquered provinces, and especially of New York, hastened to change sides and to take advantage of the proffered pardon.

Some individuals were even seen to enrol themselves under the royal standard; it seemed that they were determined to add to English civil war, the horrors of American civil war. It was to be feared that their example would prove contagious for the other provinces, and that disaffection would manifest itself on all parts.

The intrigues of governor Tryon, to compass this object, were no longer a secret; for this very purpose he had been appointed brigadier general, and his ma-

noeuvres had already succeeded in many places. On the contrary, the business of recruiting moved very heavily on the part of the Americans, whereas desertion enfeebled their armies from day to day. To so many evils was joined another more fatal still; the bills of credit began to depreciate. The government, however, had no other source of revenue. It was not yet sufficiently confirmed to hazard the imposition of taxes, payable in specie; and this measure would besides have produced only an increase of the evil, by augmenting the discredit of paper: it was therefore much to be apprehended that money, this principal sinew of war, would ere long be totally wanting. The emission of new bills of credit would infallibly accelerate their daily depreciation; and yet it was impossible, by reason of the ever increasing exigencies of the public service, to abstain from continual issues. Already there were not wanting those who refused not only to receive them at a discount, but even at any rate whatever. The present time was painful, and the future appeared still more alarming. It was feared by all, and asserted by many, that the tomb of independence was not far from its cradle; some even openly blamed the Congress for having declared independence, and thereby closed all avenue to an honourable accommodation: before this declaration, they said, we could treat with honour, but since, not without shame, and even becoming the fable of the universe.

Surrounded by obstacles so numerous and so fearful, the Congress lost none of their firmness, and resolved to set fortune at defiance. Far from betraying any symptoms of despair, they manifested greater

confidence than ever, and appeared to admit no doubt respecting the eventual success of the great enterprise in which they were engaged. They knew that constancy triumphs over fate. Full of a noble ardour, they preferred the dangers of war to those of peace. The admirable fortitude with which they sustained the assaults of adverse fortune, when a common ruin seemed ready to engulf them with the cause they supported, must eternally attach to their names the glory of having laid the foundations of a new state. The nations of the earth rendered the homage of their admiration to so much magnanimity.

When at first, the ship of America, impelled by propitious breezes, seemed about to enter the port in safety, the wisdom of the pilots was universally applauded; but in the midst of a tremendous tempest, their intrepidity and their constancy shone with a splendour still more dazzling. The people of Europe felt an increase of affection for the Americans, and of hatred against England, for attempting to reduce to slavery so generous a nation. So natural it is to the human heart to take an interest, from the sentiment of its independence, in the efforts made by the weak against the powerful, or from commiseration to sympathize with the brave in their struggles against the perversity of fate. Thus the Americans honoured their reverses by virtues, at the epoch when the public fortune appeared upon the verge of ruin, and no cheering ray was seen to gleam in the perspective.

We have already mentioned the measures taken by the Congress, in order to re-enforce the army by new levies, to remedy the danger resulting from the short-

ness of engagements, and to call into the field the provincial militia. As if they had intended to defy the presence and the menaces of a formidable enemy, they employed themselves in drawing up various articles of confederation and perpetual union between the states, that each of them might know its particular authority within, and its reciprocal duties towards the others; as also to ascertain the extent of executive power with which it was requisite that Congress should be invested. These articles were adopted in the sitting of the fourth of October, and immediately sent to the respective Assemblies of each state for approbation. The principal were the following:

“ The thirteen states confederated under the name of the *United States of America*.

“ They all and each obligated themselves to contribute for the common defence, and for the maintenance of their liberties.

“ Each particular state preserved the exclusive right of regulating its internal government, and of framing laws in all matters not included in the articles of the confederation, and which could not any way be prejudicial to it.

“ No particular state was either to send or to receive ambassadors, enter into negotiations, contract engagements, form alliances, or make war, excepting in case of sudden attack, with any king, prince or power whatsoever, without the consent of the United States.

“ No individual holding any magistracy, office or commission whatsoever from the United States, or from any one of them, was allowed to accept of any



presents, nor any offices, or titles of any kind whatever, from any foreign king, prince or potentate.

“ No Assembly was to confer titles of nobility.

“ No state was to make alliances or treaties of what kind soever with another, without the consent of all.

“ Each particular state had authority to maintain in peace as well as in war the number of armed ships and of land troops, judged necessary by the General Assembly of all the states, and no more.

“ There should be a public treasury for the service of the confederation, which was to be replenished by the particular contributions of each state; the same to be proportioned according to the number of inhabitants of every age, sex or condition, with the exception however of Indians.

“ A general Congress was to be convoked every year on the first Monday of November, to be composed of deputies from all the states: it was invested with all the powers that belong to the sovereigns of other nations.” These powers were exactly enumerated.

“ Every individual holding any office, and receiving either salary, wages or emolument whatsoever, was thereby excluded from Congress.

“ There was to be a Council of State composed of one deputy for each province, nominated annually by his colleagues of the same state, and in case these should not agree, by the general Congress.” Each state was to have but one vote.

“ During the session as well as the recess of the general Congress, the Council of State was to be charged with the management of the public affairs of the confederation, always restricting itself however

within the limits prescribed by the laws, and particularly by the articles of the confederation itself.

“ The province of Canada was invited to enter into the Union.”

The Congress afterwards desiring to revive the courage of those who had suffered themselves to be intimidated by reverses, and to prevent their sentiments from changing with fortune, issued a proclamation wherein they represented anew the justice of their cause, their long and fruitless supplications, the cruel proceedings of the ministers, the necessity of the declaration of independence, and the unanimous approbation with which it had been received. Then followed the enumeration of all the successes which had attended the American arms in the northern provinces: the English driven from Boston, repulsed before Charleston, arrested in their progress at Ticonderoga. Finally the American people were invited to consider the immense value of the prizes made at sea, the abundance of provisions, and the probability of soon seeing the army suitably clothed and equipped. All the citizens, and especially those of Pennsylvania, of New Jersey and of the neighbouring states, were exhorted to show themselves united and firm in the defence of country. “ Consider,” said the proclamation, “ that the present state of our affairs is not to be attributed to any faults of the generals or want of valour in the soldiers, but to the shortness of the term of enlistments. Reflect that foreign princes have already furnished us with a multitude of articles necessary to war, and be assured that we shall receive from them succours still more efficacious. Be not wanting to yourselves; nor suffer the rich and popu-

lous city of Philadelphia to fall into the power of the enemy: let not the occasion escape of overwhelming his principal army, now it is far from the ships which form so great a part of its force. The loss of Philadelphia would not be followed by the ruin of our cause, but wherefore should the enemy enjoy this triumph? Let us arrest his career, let us baffle his efforts; let us prove to the friends of America, even the most distant, that we are all animated with one same spirit, and with one only will, to defend against cruel enemies what man holds, and ought to hold the most dear. Remember that the success of our efforts will secure the eternal repose and safety of the United States, and attach to our names an immortal glory: stand firm, therefore, and preserve yourselves for the day of victory; be prepared for a happier destiny."

Desirous that the authority of religion should encourage and confirm the people in their fidelity, the Congress recommended, that the assemblies of the different states should appoint a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to obtain from the clemency of the Most High, prosperity for the arms and success for the just cause of America.

But the danger increasing continually, and the enemy approaching the banks of the Delaware, the Congress upon the representations of generals Putnam and Mifflin took the resolution on the twelfth of December to withdraw from Philadelphia, and adjourned themselves to the twentieth of the same month at Baltimore, in Maryland.

The departure of Congress spread great consternation in the city, from fear as well of the English as of the loyalists, who were very numerous there, though

three years, and of the interest annually. For this purpose they established a loan office in each of the United States, to be superintended by a commissioner appointed by the said states respectively, who should receive a commission of one eighth per cent. on all monies that should be brought into the office. A short time after, observing that the loan made little progress, the interest was raised to six per cent.

With the same intention the Congress also created a lottery consisting of one hundred thousand tickets, each ticket divided into four billets at ten, twenty, thirty or forty dollars each, and to be drawn in four classes. This lottery after deduction of the prizes, was to raise the sum of fifteen hundred thousand dollars. The holders of the fortunate billets might receive under certain conditions, a treasury bank note for the prize or prizes drawn, payable at the end of five years, and an annual interest on the same of four per cent. It was hoped thus to amass a considerable sum, as well by the gain of the lottery, as by the loan of the prizes. These operations had besides another object: by obviating the necessity of emitting new bills of credit, they tended to enhance the value of those in circulation. But the evil was already so great, that if these remedies were not altogether useless, at least they could afford but little palliation. It was therefore deemed necessary to resort to more efficacious means. As it was especially in Pennsylvania that the paper money was depreciated, the Congress decreed that the council of safety of this province, should take the most prompt and effectual measures for punishing those who should refuse the bills, and that the general should lend assistance to carry into



effect the resolutions of the council. 'This committee resolved that whoever should refuse to receive the bills of credit in payment of any debt or contract, or as the price of any commodity or merchandise whatsoever, or who should demand a greater price in bills, than in coined money, should be considered for the first time, as an enemy of society, and should lose either the amount of his debt, or of the article sold; which should be considered thenceforth as the property of the debtor or of the purchaser. He was punished besides with a fine more or less considerable, according to the value of the sums stipulated. But in case of relapse, independently of the penalties above mentioned, the delinquents were to be banished or confined in such mode and place as the council of safety should think proper. Several offenders against this law, having been condemned to shut their shops and to cease their traffic, some even having been banished; the former were permitted to return to their commerce, and the latter to their homes, in the hope that the remembrance of past punishment, and the apprehension of future, would determine them to abstain from these practices, so prejudicial to the public credit, and to the cause of independence.

A short time after, the Congress perceived that not only the authority of the council of safety in Pennsylvania had proved insufficient to check the depreciation of the continental paper in that province, but that the evil began to manifest itself also in the others. They deemed it therefore expedient to labour directly themselves to prevent this scourge, and decreed that whoever in any purchase, sale or bargain, of whatsoever nature, should presume to rate gold and silver coin

at a higher value than the bills of credit issued by Congress, should be declared an enemy to the liberty of the United States, and should lose the price stipulated of the transaction in which this difference of value should have been made. They further decreed that the provincial Assemblies should be requested to constitute the bills lawful money, that could not be refused in payment of debts, whether public or private; and that the refusal should operate the extinction of the debt. The Assemblies took the measures which appeared to them proper to fulfil the intentions of Congress. The first effect of these different regulations was that all vendible articles rose in proportion to the depreciation of paper; which seemed to increase in the ratio of the efforts that were made to prevent it. Another consequence was, that the debtors liberated themselves from the claims of their creditors with a money continually declining in value: and though this year the discount was not considerable, since an hundred dollars in specie might be had for one hundred and four in paper, many private fortunes suffered from it; and the example became pernicious. In order to arrest so serious an evil, the Congress invited the provincial assemblies to become responsible for the redemption of the bills it had emitted, hoping that the guarantee of each State for its proportional part, added to that of Congress, might restore the public confidence. It was also thought very proper that the assemblies of the several states should impose without delay, such taxes as they might judge, from the condition of the people, could be best supported, and collected with the least difficulty. The Congress promised, that the sums produced by these

taxes, should be passed to the credit of each state in liquidation of their proportion of the public debt. The assemblies conformed to the recommendations of Congress; and this body also decreed another loan of two millions of dollars. But all these measures produced little or no effect, from the pressure of the times, the uncertainty of the future, and the abundance of bills already emitted, from the facility and the need which the Congress had, as well as the particular states, to put more into circulation every day.

But whatever might prove to be the success of the efforts of Congress to raise troops, to maintain the public credit and to wrest victory from the hands of the enemy, they well knew that if the European powers came not promptly to the succour of America, she could cherish but a feeble hope of triumph. Fortunately it was known that these powers, and especially those whose naval forces rendered their assistance of the most importance, at the head of whom was France, were all disposed to favour America, either out of hatred towards England, or from the prospect of private advantages. Independently of the general inclinations of the European nations, these political sentiments manifested themselves by no equivocal tokens. The American ships were received in the French and Spanish ports, in Europe as well as in the West Indies, as belonging to a nation not only friendly, but moreover as belonging to a nation really and absolutely independent. The French and the Spaniards derived an immense advantage from it; they began to reap the fruits of this commerce with America, whereof England had hitherto monopolized the exclusive benefit. Nor did they restrict them-

selves to receiving the Americans with cordiality in their ports; they also permitted their privateers publicly to sell therein the prizes they had taken from the English, whether in Europe or in the West Indies. The remonstrances which the British ministers had addressed upon this subject to the courts of Versailles and of Madrid, had not produced any sensible effect. It was no longer a secret that there daily departed from the ports of France, ships laden with munitions of war for America. There was also a fact which the English could in no shape endure, and against which they raised a violent clamour; not only, as we have related, were the American privateers received into the ports of the French West Indies, where they sold their prizes, and provided themselves with all necessary articles, but no small number of the French themselves fitted out privateers under the American flag, and furnished with the commissions of Congress, infested every sea, and depredated upon the English commerce; which procedure, as the French government did not interdict, it was necessary to conclude that it approved. There was remarked also in France a general inclination in all classes, and especially among the noblesse, to enter into the service of the United States; already several of these last were arrived in America, and had treated with the Congress; among others, the Chevalier *de Fermoy*, appointed brigadier general in the American armies, and M. de Portail, an officer of distinguished talents and valour, who was placed at the head of the engineers, a corps as yet very imperfectly organized in America. Never in any other war, had the French, naturally so propense to military



enterprises, manifested an equal ardour to place themselves under the colours of a foreign power. If this enthusiasm may be attributed in part to the political opinions which then prevailed generally in Europe, nevertheless, it must chiefly be imputed to the known disposition of the government. It is even extremely probable that France would have declared war against Great Britain sooner than she did, if Lewis XVI. had been of a less pacific character. England saw with as much solicitude, as the Americans with hope, the preparations that were made with incredible activity in the ports of France and of Spain.

If the British ministers demanded the reason of them, they were answered, that a discussion with Portugal rendered an approaching rupture with that kingdom a thing to be apprehended: that the seas were covered with English fleets, and American privateers, and that independently of so furious a maritime war, such armies were sent by England into the New World as there never had been example of; that consequently France and Spain owed it to themselves to increase their forces, for the protection of their commerce and the security of their colonies. It was observed also, that it appeared sufficiently surprising that those, who not content with putting in motion all their national troops, had also despatched to America a large army of foreign mercenaries, should find it extraordinary that their neighbours should stand upon their guard against all the events with which they might be menaced. These explanations were by no means satisfactory to the English government, and in no degree diminished the hopes of the Americans, who saw clearly that the motives alleged were

far from corresponding with the immensity of the preparations. It had never been questioned that the family compact, concluded in 1761, between his most christian majesty and the catholic king, was chiefly designed to unite and confederate all the branches of the house of Bourbon, in order to reduce the power of England: and what more favourable occasion could present itself than the American war?

Such evidently was the object of the extraordinary preparations of France and Spain; and if instead of those profound lawyers who then directed the counsels of England, the energetic Earl of Chatham, or some other statesman of his stamp, had guided the helm of state, it is impossible to doubt that England would at that very time have declared war against the house of Bourbon. Experience has proved, this time, that fortune assists the bold, and that this world belongs to him that can seize it. As to Holland, if, being less warlike than France and Spain, she made no armaments that could excite umbrage, at least her merchants, attracted by the lure of gain, supplied the Americans abundantly with munitions, with arms, and with whatever they had need of to sustain the war. All the other powers of Europe appeared to be animated, more or less, with the same spirit. Portugal alone persisted in fidelity to England, and would never consent to supply the Americans with arms or munitions, or that their privateers should be received into any Portuguese port.

Maturely reflecting upon this state of things, and urged by necessity, the Congress resolved to make the most of the present occasion. The entire league that was forming against England had France for its

foundation, or rather for its heart; accordingly, so early as the beginning of the year 1776, the Congress had sent Silas Deane to reside near the French government, in order to penetrate its intentions respecting America. He was instructed to neglect no efforts to dispose minds in her favour, and to obtain immediately all the succours of arms and munitions that circumstances might admit of. He acquitted himself of his mission with extreme diligence, especially in what related to the material part. He succeeded in obtaining supplies from private companies as well as from individual contractors, among whom should be mentioned *Caron de Beaumarchais*, who manifested in this transaction an activity no less advantageous to himself, than to the Americans. These arms and warlike stores were openly shipped in American vessels, or privately put on board those of France. Silas Deane did more; he found means to obtain them from the royal arsenals. They delivered him fifteen thousand muskets, which he hastened to expedite for America, where they were of essential utility. He treated with all those French gentlemen who were desirous of serving under the standard of Washington, but not always to the satisfaction of Congress, who sometimes could not confirm the conditions, or even the choice of persons, made by their envoy.

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far from corresponding with the immensity of the preparations. It had never been questioned that the family compact, concluded in 1761, between his most christian majesty and the catholic king, was chiefly designed to unite and confederate all the branches of the house of Bourbon, in order to reduce the power of England: and what more favourable occasion could present itself than the American war?

Such evidently was the object of the extraordinary preparations of France and Spain; and if instead of those profound lawyers who then directed the counsels of England, the energetic Earl of Chatham, or some other statesman of his stamp, had guided the helm of state, it is impossible to doubt that England would at that very time have declared war against the house of Bourbon. Experience has proved, this time, that fortune assists the bold, and that this world belongs to him that can seize it. As to Holland, if, being less warlike than France and Spain, she made no armaments that could excite umbrage, at least her merchants, attracted by the lure of gain, supplied the Americans abundantly with munitions, with arms, and with whatever they had need of to sustain the war. All the other powers of Europe appeared to be animated, more or less, with the same spirit. Portugal alone persisted in fidelity to England, and would never consent to supply the Americans with arms or munitions, or that their privateers should be received into any Portuguese port.

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They wished, especially, that, by the agency of these new ministers, what was only a simple desire, might be rendered an efficacious will, and that the effect should finally follow the intention. Accordingly, in their sitting of the twenty-sixth of September, they appointed commissioners to the court of France, Franklin, Jefferson and Deane, all men of singular address, and excellent judgment. But Jefferson having excused himself, he was replaced by Arthur Lee. Their instructions were, to continue to procure arms and munitions; to obtain permission from the government to fit out in the French ports, at the expense of the United States, a number of ships of war, in order to harass the commerce of England; and finally, to use all proper means to induce the court of France to conclude a treaty of alliance, of which the Congress had communicated the plan to their commissioners. They were also directed to solicit a loan of ten millions of francs, or at least of six, and even of four, in case they should not be able to obtain more. But above all things, they were to endeavour to procure the recognition of the independence of the United States. The Congress knowing that what caused the indecision of foreign princes on this point, was the fear that the Americans might abandon them all at once, after having engaged them to espouse their cause, and return to their ancient submission, enjoined it upon their commissioners to exert all their endeavours to persuade his most christian majesty that the United States would never again come under the sceptre of the king of England; that the confidence he might deign to place in their efforts and constancy, should not in any time be deceived; that there never

should be granted to the English any exclusive traffic, or any commercial advantages and privileges greater than those that should be conceded to the subjects of France. The Congress proposed, besides, that, in case of war between France and Great Britain, the United States and France should reciprocally obligate themselves to communicate to each other the negotiations of peace that might take place, in order that each party might, if so disposed, participate therein. The commissioners were ordered to solicit a new supply of twenty or thirty thousand muskets, with a certain quantity of artillery, and abundant munitions, all to be conveyed to America in French vessels, but at the expense of the United States. Finally, that the hopes of advantages to be derived from an alliance with the Americans, might be seconded by the fear of the detriment that would result from their re-union with England, the Congress strictly charged their envoys to give out that notwithstanding the good will of the United States, they would not be able unassisted, to hold out for any length of time against the greatly superior power of Great Britain: that therefore it was to be feared, if they were abandoned to themselves, that they would be forced to submit, and that the British government would gain by conquest what would never have been yielded by consent. Then, as to Spain, in order to remove the apprehensions she might have conceived of a revolt in her colonies, the commissioners were authorized to assure her by the most energetic protestations, and to persuade her, that the Spanish colonies should, in no event, ever receive any molestation from the United States. Finally, it was prescribed them to use all vigi-

lance, in order to discover whether the British cabinet had opened any new negotiations in Europe for subsidizing still other mercenary troops to be sent against America; and in such case they were to endeavour to obtain the interference of France, to defeat so pernicious a design.

Furnished with these instructions, the American envoys commenced their voyage. Franklin arrived at Nantz the thirteenth of December, and a few days after, at Paris. For a long time there had not appeared in this city a man more venerable or more venerated, as well in consideration of his age, which already exceeded seventy years, as for the superiority of his genius, the vast extent of his knowledge, and the brilliant renown of his virtues. At no epoch perhaps, have the French, naturally so fond of novelties, manifested an equal expectation. Their conversations, their writings, even their thoughts, appeared to have no other object but the cause of America. It found among them only admirers and zealous partisans. Accordingly, from the moment the American envoy was arrived in their capital, his person, his actions, his words, his opinions, became the object of public curiosity. Nor can it be denied that he assumed with sagacity a demeanour well suited to the situation of his country and to his own. He presented himself in every place as the citizen of an unfortunate country, reduced to extremities by the cruelty of England. Who could remark his hoary locks, and tottering walk, without reflecting that this aged man had traversed an immense ocean to recommend the cause of his country to those who were able to embrace its defence? "Never before," it



was exclaimed, "has so meritorious a work been proposed to French generosity: France is the refuge of the unfortunate, the protectress of the oppressed. The war waged by England against her colonies is impious and barbarous; the blood she sheds, is innocent blood; it is only by the tutelary assistance of our king that the Americans can hope to be extricated from their cruel embarrassments, and to enjoy at length a secure and tranquil existence." Franklin soon made choice of a retreat at Passy, situated near Paris: he appeared to deplore in this retirement the misfortunes of America. A rumour got abroad, and perhaps it was purposely circulated, that the British government, taking umbrage at his presence, had demanded of the court of France that he should be sent away. Hence that compassion which is naturally felt for persecuted virtue, was excited among all classes. He became the object of a still more eager curiosity. Whether accompanied by several of his countrymen, cruelly banished or proscribed by the English government, he appeared in the public walks, or whether he presented himself in places of public or private resort, or in the meetings of the literary academies, the multitude thronged to get sight of him. In all places the portraits of Franklin were exhibited: they represented him with a venerable countenance, and dressed, as usual, in rather a singular costume, the more to attract attention. He lived at Passy in a certain style of simplicity, much resembling that of the ancient philosophers. His humorous sayings, and grave aphorisms, caused many to compare him to Socrates. The name of Franklin was upon the lips of every body; and the mode,

which so often in France directs public attention upon vain frivolities, had this time attached itself to an object worthy of all the consideration of the observer.

But the politic sage, however he might have been gratified in having drawn upon himself and upon his country the attention and interest of a people so renowned for the gentleness of their manners, desired to obtain more real advantages. Employing as much dexterity as mystery, he visited the ministers assiduously, and availed himself of the distinguished reception he found with them, to promote the interests of his constituents. His efforts were crowned with the most rapid success; and the moment appeared already at hand, when France would no longer dissemble the vigorous co-operation she had determined to afford the Americans.

But, in the mean time, fortune had shown herself so unpropitious to the Americans in New York and New Jersey, that even the capital of the confederation was in great danger of falling into the hands of the victor. The Congress became apprehensive that when this disastrous intelligence should arrive in Europe, it might have a fatal influence upon the negotiations opened by their envoys with the governments of France and of Spain; and that the interest they had hitherto manifested in favour of America, might be totally extinguished. The Congress therefore determined to renew their protestations to the courts of Versailles and Madrid, and with more energy than before, to assure them that the Americans would persist in their enterprise at all hazards; and at the same time to suggest to these powers that the advantages they would derive from their co-ope-

ration should be more considerable than had been promised them at first. The envoys of Congress were instructed to use all their endeavours that France should declare herself against England, by attacking the electorate of Hanover, or any other part of the British possessions, as well in Europe as in the East or West Indies. To arrive at this object, they were ordered to promise the most christian king, that if his majesty consented to break with Great Britain, the United States would join their forces with his to effect the conquest of the Island of Newfoundland and of Cape Breton; that the subjects of the British king, as well as those of every other power, should be forever excluded from the cod-fishery upon these banks, so that the French and the Americans only should have the right to carry it on; that the king of France should possess in absolute property the half of the Island of Newfoundland, provided he would furnish the United States with the naval forces necessary to subdue the province of Nova Scotia; and that this province, as well as the remaining part of Newfoundland, and the Island of Cape Breton, should belong to the American republic. If these offers proved insufficient to decide France, they were to propose further, that the United States were ready to consent that all the English islands of the West Indies that should be conquered in the course of the war by the joint forces of France and America, should become the entire property of his most christian majesty, and moreover, to effectuate these different conquests, that the Americans would furnish provisions at their own expense to the value of two millions of dollars, as also six frigates, completely rigged and equipped, rea-

dy for sea; in a word, that they would deport themselves in all respects as good and faithful allies. Finally, they were authorized to stipulate that all the commerce which should in future be carried on between the United States and the French West Indies, should be exercised exclusively by the vessels belonging to the subjects of his most christian majesty, or to the citizens of the United States. As to the king of Spain, the Congress proposed to engage, in case he would declare war against Great Britain, to assist him in reducing the city and port of Pensacola; they offered, besides, to conclude with him a treaty of alliance and commerce, similar to that which had been proposed to the king of France. The Americans added that in case it was true, as it was already reported, that the king of Portugal had driven from his ports with outrage, or confiscated their vessels, the United States would immediately declare war against him, if such was the desire of the courts of France and of Spain. The Congress extended their views still further: they sent commissioners to the courts of Vienna, of Berlin, and of Tuscany, in all which they had recognised a sincere interest for the cause of America. They desired that these sovereigns should be persuaded of the determination of the United States to maintain their independence. Their agents were ordered, especially to exert themselves with assiduity, in order to induce the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia to interfere in behalf of America to prevent new levies of German or Russian troops, to its prejudice. They had it also in charge to propose to the court of Berlin a treaty of commerce and amity, provided it was perfectly agreeable to the kings of France and of Spain.



Such were the resolutions adopted by the Congress to confirm the state, threatened, in its infancy, with approaching ruin. But the assiduity with which they prosecuted their political negotiations, in no degree diminished the vigour of their military preparations. They not only manifested no disposition to abandon the design of independence, and come to an arrangement with England, but it is also seen that they made no proposition to the foreign powers that was either demonstrative of despair, or unworthy of a state enjoying the entire plentitude of its force and of its freedom. Certain members of Congress, it is true, proposed resolutions that denoted less confidence and firmness: one, for example, was disposed to authorize the commissioners at the court of France to transfer in favour of that power the absolute monopoly of commerce which had been enjoyed by England; another suggested that France should be offered the exclusive commerce of certain articles; others, finally, proposed a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive. But, the fortune of the republic prevailed, which had reserved it a higher destiny. All these propositions were rejected by the wiser and more numerous part of the members of Congress. It was evident that if they had been adopted, they might have been considered as a tacit avowal of the desperate state of affairs, and must consequently have produced an effect directly contrary to that which their authors expected from them. Besides, France had quite other and far more cogent motives for breaking with England, and such as would suffice to induce her to take this resolution, provided the Americans only manifested a determination to combat to the last with unshaken constancy.

The instructions sent by the Congress to their commissioners, were intercepted by the English, who caused them to be published. This gave the Congress no regret; they had no doubt that such an evidence of their unalterable resolution to maintain their independence, in the midst of so many reverses, would convince the European princes who desired the dismemberment of the British empire, that it was time to declare themselves, unless they were willing to see the resistance of the Americans rendered fruitless by the inferiority of their forces, and the conquest of their country.

But whatever was the constancy of Congress, or the attraction of their proposals to foreign sovereigns, they could little expect that, in so deplorable a state of their affairs, they would consent to espouse the cause of the Americans; it being but too natural, in policy, to abandon those who appear to be sinking. Words little avail when they are unsupported by arms and the smiles of fortune. But she had shown herself so hostile to America towards the conclusion of the present year, as to render it but too probable that two or three cold nights, by freezing the waters of the Delaware, would place in the power of the English, in spite of all the Americans could do to prevent it, the capital of the entire confederation. And even if the cold should not prove so rigorous as was usual at this season, the army of Washington, already so weak, would be dissolved with the expiration of the engagement of the soldiers, at the end of the year. Nor could it be expected, that in so much adversity new recruits would come forward to replace the disbanded troops. In this state of things, the best that

could be expected was, that after the entire submission of the more open provinces, the miserable fragments of the American army would seek refuge in the strongest places, in the forests and inaccessible mountains, when a partisan war would commence, that could have no decisive effect upon the final issue of the war. But Washington was not discouraged; and before the coming of severe frost, or the departure of the greater part of his soldiers deprived him of all power, he resolved by a bold and well directed movement, to make a new trial of the fortune of the republic, by attacking a strong and victorious enemy who was far from suspecting that he could have the thought of such an attempt. An heroic resolution, for which posterity ought to bear him an eternal gratitude! From this moment, the war suddenly assumed a new face, and victory began at length to incline in favour of the Americans.

Washington had observed that general Howe, either to procure more commodious quarters for his troops in this rigorous season, or to impede the Americans in recruiting, or finally because he believed the war at an end, and his enemy no longer in a condition to act, had too far extended the wings of his army, which occupied the entire province of New-Jersey and the left bank of the Delaware, from Trenton down to Burlington. Colonel Ralle, a Hessian officer of great merit, was cantoned in the first of these places, with his brigade of infantry and a detachment of English dragoons, the whole constituting a corps of fourteen or fifteen hundred men. Bordentown, a few miles below, was occupied by colonel Donop, with another brigade of Hessians; and still lower down within

twenty miles of Philadelphia, was stationed another corps of Hessians and English. Knowing the extreme weakness of their enemy, and holding him as it were degraded by his recent defeats, they kept a negligent guard. The rest of the army was lodged in places more distant, and principally at Princeton, at New-Brunswick, and at Amboy. Washington having attentively considered the extent of the enemies' quarters, conceived the hope of surprising the corps that were nearest to the river, and too remote from the others to be succoured in season. In order to make his attack with more order and effect, he divided his army, which consisted almost entirely in the militia of Pennsylvania and Virginia, into three corps, the first and most considerable of which was to pass the Delaware at Mackenky's-ferry, about nine miles above Trenton. The commander-in-chief, accompanied by generals Sullivan and Greene, had reserved to himself the conduct of this corps, to which a few pieces of artillery were attached. It was destined to attack Trenton. The second division, under the command of general Irwin, was directed to cross at Trenton-ferry, about a mile below the village of this name, and having reached the left bank, to sieze without loss of time, the bridge over the little river Assumpink, in order to intercept the retreat of the enemy when he should be dislodged from Trenton by the division under Washington. Finally, the third corps, commanded by general Cadwallader, was ordered to pass the river at Bristol, and proceed to take post at Burlington. The night of Christmas was appointed for the expedition. The dispositions being made according to the plan above mentioned, the Americans proceeded with ad-



mirable order and silence towards the Delaware. The chiefs exhorted their soldiers to be firm and valiant, to wash out the stains of Long Island, of New York, and of New Jersey; they represented to them the necessity, the glory and the brilliant fruits of victory; they incessantly reminded them that this night was about to decide upon the fate of their country. An extreme ardour manifested itself throughout the ranks. The three columns arrived in the dusk of evening at the bank of the river. Washington had hoped that the passage of the troops and transportation of the artillery might have been effectuated before midnight, so as to have time to reach the destined points by break of day, and to surprise the enemy at Trenton. But the cold was so intense, and the river so obstructed with floating ice, that it was impossible to cross and to land the artillery, earlier than four in the morning. All the troops having at length gained the left bank, the first corps was parted into two divisions, one of which turning to the right marched towards Trenton, by the road which runs along the river; the other, guided by Washington in person, took the upper or Pennington road. The distance, by either route, being nearly equal, it was hoped that the two columns might arrive at the same time. It was enjoined them to engage in combat without any delay, and after having driven in the out-posts, to fall immediately upon the main body of the enemy, at Trenton, without giving him time to recover from his surprise. They exerted all their efforts to arrive before day; but a thick fog, and a mist mingled with sleet, which rendered the road slippery, retarded their march. The two divisions, however, reached Tren-

ton at eight o'clock. Notwithstanding so many obstacles and the hour already so late, the Hessians of colonel Ralle had no suspicion of the approach of the enemy.

The Americans having therefore fallen unexpectedly upon the advanced guards, routed them immediately. Colonel Ralle sent his regiment to their succour, in order to sustain the first shock, and to give time for the rest of his forces to arrange themselves for defence. But the first line involved the second in disorder, and both fell back tumultuously upon Trenton. Colonel Ralle having hastily drawn out his Hessians, advanced to encounter the enemy in the open field; but he was mortally wounded in the first onset, and the Americans charging the Germans with great fury, the latter betook themselves to flight, leaving upon the field six pieces of light artillery. They attempted to escape by the road of Princeton, but Washington perceiving it, despatched several companies to pre-occupy the way, who received the fugitives in front. Thus surrounded on every side, the three German regiments of Ralle, of Anspach, and of Knyphausen, were constrained to lay down arms and surrender at discretion. Some few, and chiefly cavalry or light infantry, in all not exceeding five hundred men, succeeded in effecting their escape by the lower road which leads to Bordenton. Another detachment of Hessians, who were out this same morning upon a foraging excursion at some distance from their camp, warned by the noise, and afterwards by the flight of their countrymen, retired precipitately to Princeton. General Irwin had exerted his utmost endeavours to pass the river at the

time prescribed, in order to take part in the action; but the floating ice was so accumulated, in this part of the river, as to render the passage absolutely impracticable. This part of the Hessians, therefore, had the facility of retiring in safety to Bordenton. General Cadwallader was not more fortunate in the attempt he made to cross lower down, and to take post at Burlington, pursuant to the plan of attack. When a part of his infantry had reached the left bank, it was found impossible to advance with the artillery; unable therefore to act with any effect, and finding himself in a perilous situation, he re-passed to the right bank of the Delaware. Thus the design of the commander-in-chief was accomplished only in part; but the event demonstrated, that if the rigorous cold of this night had not prevented its entire execution, all the royal troops that were stationed in the vicinity of the river, would have been surrounded and taken. The loss of the Hessians in killed and wounded amounted only to thirty or forty, but the number of prisoners was at first upwards of nine hundred, and even exceeded a thousand, when all those were collected who had concealed themselves in the houses. After having obtained this success, Washington paused; not willing to lose by imprudence the advantages he owed to the wisdom of his measures. His forces were not sufficient to cope with those which the English generals could have assembled in a few hours. A strong corps of light infantry was quartered at Princeton, a town only a few miles distant from Trenton: to this might easily have been joined the brigade of Donop, and other battalions that were cantoned in the neighbouring places. The Americans

consequently evacuated Trenton, and passed over to the right bank of the river, with their prisoners, and the trophies of their victory. Their generals resolved to make the most of it, in order to revive the courage and confidence of the dispirited people. They caused the captive Hessians to defile, with a sort of triumphal pomp, through the streets of Philadelphia, followed by their arms and banners. And yet such was the terror inspired by the very name of these Germans, that even at the moment in which they traversed the city as vanquished and prisoners, many of the inhabitants suspected it was only a stratagem of their own leaders to animate them: so impossible it seemed to them that warriors from Germany should have been overcome by American soldiers. The English appeared to them far less formidable, because they knew them. Man is naturally disposed to fear most those objects of which he has the least knowledge: the uncouth language, the novel manners, and even the dress of the German soldiers, inspired a certain dread. But when they were satisfied that the spectacle they beheld was not an illusion, words cannot describe their exultation at so unexpected a success; having at first rated the Hessians far above the English, they now held them as much below. And, in effect, this affair of Trenton had so changed the face of things, that the public mind was rapidly elevated from despondency to an extreme confidence. The English themselves could not remark without astonishment this sudden metamorphosis in an enemy whom they considered as already vanquished and quelled. They were unable to conceive how troops of such high renown had been compelled to lay down arms before



militia, hastily collected, ill provided with arms, and totally devoid of discipline. Hence, as it happens in reverses, suspicions, reproaches and accusations arose on all parts. It was vociferated that the English general had too far extended his quarters; that colonel Ralle had committed an imprudence, finding himself the weaker, in marching out of his quarters to charge the enemy; that he had, besides, neglected his guard; and that his soldiers, instead of being at their posts, were gone out in quest of plunder. However this might have been, the entire British army put itself in motion: colonel Donop, trembling for himself and for his corps, retired with precipitation, by the way of Amboy, to unite with general Leslie at Princeton; and general Grant, who with the main body of the army occupied New Brunswick, advanced upon Princeton to join the van-guard, stationed at that place. Lord Cornwallis himself, who was then at New York, on the point of embarking for England, at the news of this fatal event, returned with the utmost expedition into New Jersey. But the Americans felt their courage revive: on all parts they ran to arms, and the forces of Washington were so increased that he conceived the design of more extensive operations, and thought himself in a situation to attempt an expedition upon the frontiers of New Jersey. Accordingly, he ordered general Cadwallader to pass the Delaware, and take a strong position upon the left bank; but to advance with extreme caution, and to avoid unexpected rencounters. General Mifflin, with a considerable corps of Pennsylvania militia, had joined general Irwin, and they both crossed the river. Washington himself followed them immedi-

ately, and concentrated all his troops at Trenton. Here the militia of New England, whose term of service was expired, were inclined to quit the army, and go to their homes; but the instances of their generals, and a bounty of ten dollars, induced the greater part of them to remain. The English, who had assembled in great strength at Princeton, resolved to lose no time, but to go and attack Washington in his quarters at Trenton, before he should receive new re-enforcements; they also hoped that the expiration of engagements would greatly reduce the number of his soldiers.

1777. The second of January, Lord Cornwallis marched with the van-guard towards Trenton, where he arrived about four in the morning. The rear-guard was posted at Maidenhead, a village situated half way between Princeton and Trenton; other regiments were on the march from New Brunswick, to re-enforce the principal army. Washington, finding the enemy in such force, and so near, retired behind the river of Trenton, also called the Assumpink, where he set about intrenching himself, having first secured the bridge. The English attempted the passage at various points, but every where without success; all the fords being diligently guarded. A cannonade was engaged, which produced little effect, though it lasted until night: the Americans stood firm in their intrenchments. Cornwallis waited for re-enforcements, intending to advance to the assault the day following; but his adversary was not disposed to put so much at stake. On the other hand, to re-pass the Delaware, then more than ever obstructed with floating ice, in the presence of a formidable ene-

my, was too perilous an operation to be attempted without temerity. Washington therefore found himself anew in a very critical position: but it was then that he embraced a resolution remarkable for its intrepidity. Reflecting that he was advanced too far to be able to retreat without manifest danger, he determined to abandon all at once the banks of the Delaware, and to carry the war into the very heart of New Jersey. He considered that Cornwallis, in all probability, would apprehend being cut off from the province of New York, and fearing besides for the magazines at New Brunswick, which were abundantly stocked for the service of the entire British army, would himself also retire from the river; and thus the city of Philadelphia would be preserved, a great part of New-Jersey recovered, and defensive war changed into offensive; advantages which could not but animate the inhabitants with new courage. If the English general persisted in his design, he passed the river, indeed without obstacle, and became master of Philadelphia. But whatever were to be the effects of this disastrous event, it was better to abandon Philadelphia, and preserve the army entire, than to lose at the same time both the one and the other. This plan having been approved in a council of war, composed of all the generals of the army, dispositions were immediately commenced for carrying it promptly into effect. The baggage was sent down to Burlington; and at one o'clock in the morning, the enemy appearing perfectly tranquil, the Americans rekindled the fires of their camp, and leaving guards at the bridge and fords, with orders to continue the usual rounds and patrols, they defiled with equal promptitude and silence.

Taking the road of Allentown, which is the longest, in order to avoid the Assumpink, and the encounter of the enemy at Maidenhead, they proceeded towards Princeton. Three English regiments had lodged there this same night; two of them, at break of day, had renewed their march for Maidenhead. The Americans suddenly appeared and charged them with great impetuosity. But the English defended themselves so vigorously, that the American militia, faced about, and retired in disorder. General Mercer in attempting to rally them, was mortally wounded. Washington seeing the rout of the vanguard, and perfectly aware that the loss of the day would involve the total ruin of his army, immediately advanced at the head of his select corps, composed of the conquerors of Trenton, and restored the battle. The two English regiments overwhelmed by the number and fury of the assailants, were separated, the one from the other, and found themselves in the most perilous position. Colonel Mawhood, who commanded one of them, after having intrepidly sustained the attack for some moments, made a violent effort, and opening his way with the bayonet through the ranks of the enemy, retired in safety to Maidenhead. The other, which formed the rear guard, finding itself, after a vigorous struggle, unable to follow the first, returned by the way of Hillsborough to New-Brunswick. The third, which was found still at Princeton, retreated also, after a light conflict, with great precipitation to Brunswick. About one hundred of the English were killed in this affair, and upwards of three hundred made prisoners. The loss of the Americans in slain, was nearly equal; but of this number was general Mercer,



an able and experienced officer of the province of Virginia. He was universally regretted, but especially by Washington, who bore him great esteem and affection.

After the combat, the Americans occupied Princeton. At break of day, Lord Cornwallis having perceived that the Americans had deserted their camp of Trenton, and soon penetrating what was their design, abandoned in like manner his own, and marched with all expedition towards Brunswick, fearing, lest the baggage and munitions he had accumulated there, should fall into the hands of the enemy. He arrived at Princeton almost at the same time with the American rear-guard. Washington, found himself again in imminent danger. His soldiers, fell with sleep, having taken no repose for the two preceding days; hunger tormented them, and they were almost naked in this rigorous season. The enemy who pursued them, besides the advantage of number, had every thing in abundance. Thus situated, far from the hope of continuing to act offensively, it was much for him if he could retire without loss to a place of security: wherefore, departing abruptly from Princeton, he moved with rapidity towards the upper and mountainous parts of New Jersey. To retard the enemy, he destroyed the bridges over the Millstone river, which runs between Princeton and Brunswick. Having afterwards passed the Rariton, a more considerable river, he proceeded to occupy Pluckemin, where his troops refreshed themselves, after so many toils and sufferings. But soon finding that his army was too feeble, and also that it was daily diminished by maladies and desertion, he resolved to encamp

higher up, and in a place of more security. After necessity had constrained him to make trial of fortune by adventurous feats, he was disposed to become again the master of his movements, and to take counsel of prudence alone. He retired, accordingly, to Morristown, in upper Jersey. Cornwallis, despairing of being able to continue the pursuit with success, directed his march to New Brunswick, where he found general Matthews, who, in the violence of his terror, had commenced the removal of the baggage and warlike stores. But Washington, having received a few fresh battalions of infantry, and his little army being recovered from their fatigues, soon entered the field anew, and scoured the whole country as far as the Rariton. He even crossed this river, and penetrating into the county of Essex, made himself master of Newark, of Elizabethtown, and, finally, of Woodbridge; so that he commanded the entire coast of New Jersey, in front of Staten Island. He so judiciously selected his positions, and fortified them so formidably, that the royalists shrunk from all attempt to dislodge him from any of them. Thus the British army, after having over-run victoriously the whole of New Jersey, quite to the Delaware, and caused even the city of Philadelphia to tremble for its safety, found itself now restricted to the two only posts of New Brunswick and Amboy, which, moreover, could have no communication with New York, except by sea. Thus by an army almost reduced to extremity, Philadelphia was saved, Pennsylvania protected, New Jersey nearly recovered, and a victorious and powerful enemy laid under the necessity of quit-

ting all thoughts of acting offensively, in order to defend himself.

Achievements so astonishing acquired an immense glory for the captain general of the United States. All nations shared in the surprise of the Americans; all equally admired and applauded the prudence, the constancy, and the noble intrepidity of general Washington. An unanimous voice pronounced him the saviour of his country: all extolled him as equal to the most celebrated commanders of antiquity; all proclaimed him the Fabius of America. His name was in the mouth of all; he was celebrated by the pens of the most distinguished writers. The most illustrious personages of Europe lavished upon him their praises and their congratulations. The American general, therefore, wanted neither a cause full of grandeur to defend, nor occasion for the acquisition of glory, nor genius to avail himself of it, nor the renown due to his triumphs, nor an entire generation of men perfectly well disposed to render him homage.

Reposing new confidence in their general, and having seen that it was his arm which had retrieved the public fortune, the Congress decreed that in all councils of war, Washington should not be bound by the plurality of voices, nor by the opinion of the general officers he might think proper to consult. They even preferred that in all circumstances he should take such resolutions as might appear to him the most likely to prove advantageous. The Congress immediately after returned to Philadelphia, with a view of encouraging the people still more. There passed nothing of importance during the rest of the winter and the greater part of the spring, with the exception

of some skirmishes, of which the usual effect was to harass and fatigue the English army, and to inspire the Americans with greater confidence in themselves. The royal troops, as we have said, were locked up in the two villages of Brunswick and Amboy, whence they rarely ventured to make excursions; they could not go out to plunder, nor even to forage, without extreme peril. Not only the soldiers of Washington, but even the inhabitants of New Jersey, transported with rage at the shocking excesses committed by the English, and especially by the Hessians, prepared frequent ambuscades for these predatory bands, and exterminated them by surprise. Those who could not bear arms, performed the office of spies, so that whenever the royalists made a movement, the republicans were apprized of it, and prepared to oppose it. This sudden change in the disposition of the inhabitants, who after the occupation of New York had shown themselves so favourable to the royal cause, must be attributed entirely to the unheard of ferocity with which the English carried on the war. An universal cry was heard in America against the cruelties, the massacres, the rapes, and the ravages, perpetrated by their soldiers. And even supposing that their crimes were exaggerated, the truth is still but too horrible. The Hessians, as if they had believed themselves released from all respect for humanity and justice, knew no other mode of making war but that of carrying devastation into the midst of all the property, whether public or private, of their adversaries. It was published at the time, that the Germans had been taught to believe, that all the lands they could conquer in America should become their own pro-



perty, which led them to consider the possessors of them as their natural enemies, whom they were bound to exterminate in every possible mode. But, that finding themselves not likely to profit by this expectation, they set about plundering and destroying whatever they could lay their hands upon. It was also affirmed, that this rapacious soldiery had so burthened themselves with booty, as to become almost incapable of service. The violent hatred which the Americans manifested for the Hessians, rendered them but the more outrageous in their depredations. Men accustomed to liberty, could not behold without abhorrence these brutal mercenaries, "who, not content," they said, "with submitting to be slaves in their own country, are willing, for a few pence, to become the instruments of tyranny with others, and come to interfere in a domestic quarrel, in which they have no interest." "Why," added the Americans, "have they left their homes in the old world to contribute in the new to the butchery of an innocent and generous people, who had never offended them; who, on the contrary, had exercised a noble hospitality towards a multitude of their ancestors, who sought refuge from a tyranny similar to what their countrymen were now attempting to establish in America?" This language did but the more exasperate the Germans: they manifested their fury by the most atrocious actions. It was a terrible and lamentable spectacle, to behold these fertile fields covered with ashes and with ruins. Friends and foes, republicans and loyalists, all shared a common fate. Wives and daughters suffered violence in the houses, and even before the eyes of their husbands and fathers: many fled into the forests;

but could find no refuge even there from the brutal rage of these barbarians, who pursued them. The houses were either burnt or demolished; the cattle either driven off or killed; nothing escaped their thirst of devastation. The Hessian general Heister, far from endeavouring to repress this licentious soldiery, seemed to have given them a free rein. The English general wished, but had not the power, to curb them. The Hessians were as numerous as the English themselves, and it was not thought prudent to offend them. Their example became infectious for the British troops, and they were soon found to vie with the Germans in all the scenes of violence, outrage, cruelty and plunder. New Jersey presented only the vestiges of havoc and desolation. Complaints arose from all parts of America; and they were echoed throughout Europe, to the heavy reproach of England. Among the indignant nations the French were especially distinguished; naturally humane, enemies to the English, and partisans of the Americans. It was exclaimed every where, that the English government had revived in the new world the fury of the Goths, and the barbarity of the northern Hordes. But so much immanity returned upon its source, and became more fatal to its authors than to their victims. The few remaining friends that England had, became enemies, and her enemies were filled with new hatred, and a more vehement desire of vengeance.

Citizens of all classes flew to arms with a sort of rage, to expel from their territory, as they said, these infamous robbers. Thus the excesses of the royal army were not less, and perhaps more, prejudicial to the British cause than even the efforts of Washington

and the resolutions of Congress. But it must be admitted that this ardour of pillage had also contaminated the American army. The houses and property of the unfortunate inhabitants of New Jersey were sacked, under pretext that they belonged to loyalists: the officers themselves gave their soldiers the example of depredation. Thus they were pillaged by the Hessians and English as rebels to the king, and by the Americans as being his partisans. These excesses became so revolting, that Washington, to whom they caused infinite pain, was constrained, in order to put a stop to them, to issue a proclamation denouncing the most rigorous penalties against the perpetrators of such enormities.

At this epoch, the loyalists manifested a spirit of revolt in the counties of Somerset and Worcester, in Maryland, and in that of Sussex in the state of Delaware; as also in the neighbourhood of Albany, and in the country of the Mohawks. Troops were sent to these places, in order to over-awe the disaffected: the Congress ordered that suspected persons should be arrested and detained in secure places.

About the same time, general Heath, who guarded the high lands of New York, summoned Fort Independence, situated in the vicinity of Kingsbridge. But the commander of the garrison answered with intrepidity, and prepared himself for a vigorous resistance. The Americans despairing of success by assault, abandoned the enterprise, and returned to their high and inaccessible positions.

General Howe not making any movement at the commencement of the year, indicative of an intention to enter the field very shortly, Washington resolved

to avail himself of this interval of repose to deliver his army from the small-pox, a scourge so formidable in these climates. It had made such terrible ravages the preceding year in the army of the north, that but for the obstacles the English had encountered upon the lakes, nothing would have prevented them from penetrating to the Hudson. The army of the middle was threatened with a similar calamity. Washington therefore judged it necessary to subject all his troops, as well as the militia that joined him from different parts, to a general inoculation. The affair was conducted with so much prudence in the camp that no occasion was offered the enemy to disturb its tranquillity. The physicians of the hospital of Philadelphia were ordered at the same time, to inoculate all the soldiers who traversed that city, on their way to join the army. The same precautions were taken in the other military stations, and thus the army was totally exempted from an evil, which might have clashed with the success of the ensuing campaign. The example of the soldiery proved a signal benefit to the entire population: the salutary practice of inoculation soon became general; and, by little and little, this fatal malady disappeared entirely.

Meanwhile the month of March was near its conclusion, and the defect of tents and other camp equipage which general Howe expected from England, had not yet permitted him to open the campaign. He resolved, nevertheless, to attempt some expedition, which might occasion a sensible prejudice to the enemy. The Americans, during the winter, had formed immense magazines of provisions, forage and stores of all sorts, in that rough and mountainous tract called



Courtland-Manor. The great natural strength of the country, the vicinity of the Hudson river, with its convenience in respect to the seat of war, had induced the American generals to make choice of these heights for their general repository. A little town called Peek-Kill, which lies about fifty miles up the river from New York, served as a kind of port to this natural citadel, by which it both received provisions, and dispensed supplies. As a general attempt upon Courtland-Manor presented insurmountable difficulties, not only from the strength of the country and impracticability of the ground, but from the force of the corps that were stationed in that quarter, the English general confined his views to an attack upon Peek-Kill. His troops were sent on board transports up the river for this service; the Americans, upon the approach of the British armament, finding themselves unequal to the defence of the place, and that there was no possible time to evacuate the magazines, set fire to them, and retired. The English landed without delay. The damage was considerable; but not so great as general Howe had been led to expect, though greater than the Americans would acknowledge. The English a few days after undertook a similar expedition, upon the borders of Connecticut. The Americans had deposited large quantities of stores and provisions in the town or village of Danbury, in the county of Fairfield. The charge of this enterprise was committed to general Tryon; who, besides the destruction of these stores, had flattered himself with finding a junction of many loyalists in that quarter, as soon as he should appear with the troops of the king. He appeared not to doubt it, in

consequence of the confidence he placed in the assertions of the refugees; always prompt to believe what they strongly desire. The twenty-fifth of April, a detachment of two thousand men, having passed through the sound, landed after sun-set upon the coast of Connecticut, between Fairfield and Norwalk. They advanced without interruption, and arrived at Danbury the following day. Colonel Huntingdon, who occupied this place with a feeble garrison, retired at the approach of the enemy, to a stronger position in the rear. As the English could procure no carriages, to bring off the stores and provisions, they immediately proceeded to the destruction of the magazine. The loss was serious to the American army, and particularly in the article of several hundred tents, of which it had great need, and which were the more regretted as the materials were wanting to replace them. The loyalists made not the least movement.

Meanwhile the whole country was in agitation. The militia, eager to manifest their devotion to the republic, had assembled at Reading under the banners of Congress. Arnold, who happened to be in the vicinity, engaged in the business of recruiting, at the sound of arms, always so grateful to his ear, had hastened to join the companies at Reading. General Wooster, who from the immediate service of Congress had passed into that of the state of Connecticut, as brigadier general of militia, arrived from another quarter, with considerable re-enforcements. All these troops were impatient to engage the enemy. The English, perceiving their danger, retreated with great precipitation, by the way of Ridgefield. The Americans endeavoured by every possible means to

interrupt their march, until a greater force could arrive to support them with effect in the design of cutting off their retreat. General Wooster hung upon the rear of the British, and using every advantage of ground, harassed them exceedingly, notwithstanding they had large covering parties, well furnished with field pieces, both on their flanks and rear. In one of these skirmishes, Wooster, at an age approaching closely to seventy, and in the active exertion of a valour which savoured more of youthful temerity than of the temperance and discretion of that time of life, was mortally wounded, and being carried out of the field, died shortly after, with the same resolution that he had lived. Filled with consternation at the loss of their commander, his soldiers immediately dispersed. But in the meantime, Arnold had got possession of Ridgefield, where he had already thrown up some sort of an intrenchment, to cover his front. The English presented themselves, and a hot action ensued, which lasted a considerable time. The English having carried the heights which covered the flanks of the Americans, overwhelmed them with their fire. The latter were immediately thrown into confusion, and notwithstanding the efforts of Arnold to rally them, retired with extreme precipitation to Pangatuck, three miles from Norwalk. Tryon lay that night at Ridgefield, and having set fire to some houses, renewed his march on the morning of the twenty-eighth, towards the Sound. He was again encountered by Arnold, who had assembled fresh troops, with some pieces of artillery. Continual skirmishes took place from the one bank to the other of the river Sagatuck, and a sharp contest at the

bridge across this stream. But, finally, the English, superior in number and discipline, surmounted all obstacles, and arrived at the place where their ships waited to receive them: they were unable to embark, however, without new difficulties and other combats.

The Congress decreed that a monument should be erected to Wooster, and testified their satisfaction towards Arnold by the gift of a horse, richly caparisoned.

This expedition, entered upon with so much parade, furnished little indemnity for the expense it had occasioned.

The stores destroyed, with the exception of the tents, were of inconsiderable value; and the burning of the houses of Danbury and Ridgefield, together with the other brutalities committed by the royal troops, did but increase the fury of the people, and confirm them in resistance. This occasion served also to demonstrate, how vain were the hopes which general Tryon had placed in the loyalists. Not one of them ventured to declare himself in favour of the English; the inhabitants rose, on the contrary, in all parts to repulse the assailants. It is even probable, that this enterprise of the English gave origin to another, full of audacity, on the part of the Americans. The generals of Connecticut had been informed that a commissary of the British army had formed immense magazines of forage, grain, and other necessities for the troops, at a little port called *Sagg-Harbour*, in Long Island; it was defended only by a detachment of infantry, and a sloop of twelve guns. The English, however, believed themselves sufficiently protected by their armed vessels which cruised in



the Sound: they could never persuade themselves that the Americans would dare to pass it, and attempt any thing upon Long Island. But the latter were nowise intimidated by the obstacles, and resolved to surprise Sagg-Harbour, by a sudden incursion. Accordingly, colonel Meigs, one of the intrepid companions of Arnold in the expedition of Canada, crossed the Sound with as much rapidity as ability, and arrived before day at the place where the magazines were situated. Notwithstanding the resistance of the garrison and the crews of the vessels, he burned a dozen brigs and sloops which lay at the wharf, and entirely destroyed every thing on shore. Having accomplished the object of the expedition, he returned without loss to Guilford, in Connecticut, bringing with him many prisoners. The Americans manifested, in this enterprise, the greatest humanity: they abstained from the pillage of private property, and even permitted the prisoners to retain their effects.

The winter had completely elapsed in the midst of these operations, and the season approached in which the armies were about to take the field anew. No one doubted that the English would exert their utmost endeavours to terminate the war in the present year. A formidable corps was prepared to attack the American provinces on the side of Canada, and a still more numerous army menaced those of the middle. All minds were suspended with the expectation of approaching events.

If the English generals could have commenced the campaign as soon as the season for action was arrived, it is certain, they might have obtained the most important advantages. When the spring opened, the

army of Washington was still extremely feeble. If a part of those whose term of service was expired, had been induced to remain from a consideration of the weakness of the army, and the ruin which must attend their departure before it was re-enforced, the greater number, unable to endure the severity of winter in the fields, had returned home. In the meantime, the business of recruiting under an engagement to serve during the war, or even for three years, went on but slowly, notwithstanding the promised advantages; the genius and habits of the people being averse to all subjection. The making of draughts from the militia, which was the final resource, was considered as a dangerous innovation.

As a further check upon the increase of the force in New Jersey, the New England provinces, which abounded with men of a warlike spirit, were taken up with their domestic concerns, fearing for Ticonderoga, the river Hudson, and even for Boston itself. A multitude of American privateers had gone into that port with their prizes, and the English retained all their ancient hatred against the inhabitants. The British troops cantoned in Rhode Island, afforded continual room for apprehension; they might attack Massachusetts in flank, and make inroads with impunity into the neighbouring provinces. Such, in effect, was the difficulty of raising men, that in some of the provinces the enlisting of apprentices and Irish indented servants was permitted, contrary to the former resolutions and decrees, with a promise of indemnification to their masters. The winter and spring had been employed in these preparations, but towards the latter end of May, the mild weather having com-

menced, the Americans took arms with promptitude, and Washington found himself daily re-enforced from all quarters. The English thus lost the occasion of an easy victory; perhaps, as some have written, by the delay of tents. However this may have been, they deferred taking the field till obstacles were multiplied around them.

Washington, unable as yet to penetrate the designs of general Howe, sought with vigilance to observe the direction he was about to give to his arms. It was apprehended that renewing the war in New Jersey he would endeavour to penetrate to the Delaware; and, passing the river by means of a bridge, known to be constructed for the purpose, make himself master of Philadelphia. It was conjectured also, and this was the expectation of Washington, that the English general would proceed up the Hudson river into the upper parts of the province of New York, in order to co-operate with the British army of Canada, which was at the same time to attack the fortress of Ticonderoga, and after its reduction, to operate a junction with general Howe in the vicinity of Albany. This movement of the enemy was the more to be apprehended, as, besides the advantages it promised, it was known to have been prescribed by the instructions of the British ministers. General Howe had been diverted from following them by the successes he had obtained in New Jersey, and the hope he had conceived of being able, of himself, to bring the war to a successful conclusion.

In so great an uncertainty in respect to the future operations of the enemy, Washington, having received his re-enforcements, determined to take such posi-

tions as should be equally proper to oppose them, whether the English should move towards Albany, or should resolve to march against Philadelphia, by way of New Jersey. According to this plan, the troops raised in the northern provinces, were stationed partly at Ticonderoga, and partly at Peek's-Kill, those of the middle and southern provinces, as far as North Carolina, occupied New Jersey, leaving a few corps for the protection of the more western provinces.

In this manner, if general Howe moved against Philadelphia, he found in front all the forces assembled in New Jersey, and in addition, those encamped at Peek's-Kill, who would have descended to harass his right flank. If, on the other hand, he took the direction of Albany, the corps of Peek's-Kill defended the passages in front, while his left flank might also be attacked by the troops of New Jersey, upon the banks of the Hudson. If, on the contrary, the English army of Canada came by way of the sea, to join that of general Howe upon the shores of New Jersey, the troops of Peek's-Kill could immediately unite with those that occupied the same province, and thus compose a formidable army for the defence of Philadelphia. If, finally, the army of Canada attacked Ticonderoga, the camp of Peek's-Kill might carry succours to those who were charged with the defence of that fortress. But as it was of inexpressible importance to preserve Philadelphia in the power of the United States, the Congress ordained the formation of a camp upon the western bank of the Delaware, with the double object of receiving all the troops that arrived from the south and west, and of serving, in case of need, as a reserve. Here also were to assemble all



the recruits of Pennsylvania, re-enforced by several regiments of regular troops. This army was placed under the command of general Arnold, who was then at Philadelphia. All these arrangements being made, on the twenty-eighth of May, Washington quitted his former position in the neighbourhood of Morristown, and advancing within a few miles of Brunswick, upon the left bank of the Rariton, took possession of the strong country along Middle-Brook. He turned this advantageous situation to every account of which it was capable; his camp, winding along the course of the hills, was strongly intrenched and covered with artillery; nor was it better secured by its immediate natural or artificial advantages, than by the difficulties of approach which the ground in front threw in the way of an enemy. In this situation he commanded a view of the British encampment on the hills of Brunswick, and of most of the intermediate country towards that place and Amboy. The American army, at this epoch, amounted to fifteen thousand men, inclusive of the North Carolinians, and the militia of New Jersey: but this number comprehended many apprentices, and some totally undisciplined companies.

Always controlled by a sort of fatal necessity, which was the manifest cause of all the reverses of his party, general Howe would never ascend the river Hudson towards Canada to co-operate and join with the northern British army. He persisted in his favourite object of invading New Jersey and Pennsylvania, according to the design he had conceived of penetrating through the first of these provinces to the Delaware, driving Washington before him, and reducing the whole country to so effectual a state of sub-

jection as to establish a safe and open communication between the army and New York.

He presumed, either that Washington would hazard a battle, and in that case he entertained no doubt of success; or that the Americans would constantly retire, which appeared to him the most probable. In the latter case, having by the reduction of New Jersey left every thing safe in his rear, and secured the passage of the Delaware; he became, of course, master of Philadelphia, which from its situation was incapable of any effectual defence, and could only be protected by Washington at the certain expense and hazard of a battle; than which nothing was more coveted by the English.

If the obstacles in New Jersey were found so great that they could not be overcome without much loss of time and expense of blood, his intention was to profit of the powerful naval force, and the great number of transports and vessels of all sorts which lay at New York. By means of this numerous marine the army might be conveyed either to the mouths of the Delaware and thence to Philadelphia, or into the bay of Chesapeake, which opened the way into the heart of the central provinces, and led either directly, or by crossing a country of no great extent to the possession of that city. That point gained, Philadelphia was to become the place of arms and centre of action, whilst every part of the hostile provinces of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland would, from their deep bays and navigable rivers, be exposed to the continual attacks of an enemy so powerful by sea. But it is evident that the first object of the views of the English general, was the destruction of the army of Washing-

ton, and therefore before resorting to the aid of his marine, he resolved to make trial of fortune in New Jersey, by using all the resources of art to force the enemy to an action. Accordingly having received from Europe his tents and other field equipage, with some re-enforcements composed principally of German troops, he passed over to the frontiers of New Jersey, and moved with his whole army to Brunswick, having left however a sufficient garrison at Amboy. When he had accurately examined the strength of the posts which Washington occupied, he renounced the scheme of assaulting him in his camp. He continued for several days in front of his lines offering him battle; but the American general refusing it, he pushed on detachments, and made movements as if he intended to pass him and advance to the Delaware, hoping that his enemy, alarmed for the safety of Philadelphia, would have abandoned this impregnable post to follow him. But Washington, firm in his resolution of never committing the fortune of America to the hazard of a single action, made no movement.

Meanwhile, having observed by the demonstrations of the English that their design was to prosecute their operations, not against the passages leading to Canada, but in the province of New Jersey, he ordered the troops at Peek's-Kill to march to his succour. He gave colonel Morgan, the same who had displayed so brilliant a valour at the assault of Quebec, the command of a troop of light horse, destined to annoy the left flank of the English army, and to repress, or cut off its advanced parties. General Sullivan, who occupied Princeton with a strong detachment, was ordered to fall back to a more secure position, upon

the heights of Rocky-Hill. But general Howe, perceiving that Washington was not to be enticed by these demonstrations to quit his fastnesses, resolved to put himself in motion, and to approach nearer to the Delaware. Accordingly, in the night of the fourteenth of June, the entire British army, with the exception of two thousand soldiers, who remained for the protection of Brunswick, began to move, in two columns, towards the river. The van of the first, conducted by Lord Cornwallis, and which had taken the road to the right, arrived by break of day at Somerset Court-House, nine miles distant from New Brunswick, having passed without obstacle the little river Millstone. The column of the left, under general Heister, reached at the same time the village of Middlebush, situated lower down upon the road of Princeton. But Washington, faithful to his temporizing plan, had too much penetration to be diverted from it by circumvention or sleight. He reflected, that without supposing in the enemy a temerity, which was absolutely foreign to the prudent and circumspect character of general Howe, it could not be imagined that he would venture to advance upon the Delaware and to cross that river, having to combat an army on the opposite bank, and another, still more formidable, in his rear. It was, besides, evident that if the real intention of the English had hitherto been to pass the Delaware, they would have marched rapidly towards it, without halting, as they had done, at half way. He was not ignorant, moreover, that they had advanced light to this point, leaving at Brunswick their baggage, batteaux, and bridge equipage. Having well pondered these circumstances,



Washington concluded that the project of the enemy was not to proceed to the Delaware, but to allure him from his camp of Middlebrook, in order to reduce him to the necessity of fighting. Wherefore he made no movement, but continued to remain quietly within his intrenchments. Only, as the enemy was so near, he drew up his army in order of battle, upon the heights which defended the front of his camp, and kept it all the following night under arms.

Meanwhile, the militia of New Jersey assembled from every quarter, with great alacrity; and general Sullivan with his detachment marching upon the left bank of the Millstone, had approached the Rariton, so as to be able to disquiet the enemy by frequent skirmishes in front, and to join, if necessary, with the commander-in-chief.

General Howe having ascertained that his adversary was too wary to be caught in the snares that he had hitherto laid for him, and that his menaces to pass the Delaware would be fruitless, resolved next to try whether the appearance of fear, and a precipitate retreat towards Amboy, might not have the effect of drawing him into the plain, and consequently, of forcing him to an engagement. According to this new plan, in the night of the nineteenth, he suddenly quit-  
ted his position in front of the enemy, where he had begun to intrench himself; he retired in haste to Brunswick, and thence, with the same marks of precipitation, towards Amboy. The English, as they retreated, burned a great number of houses, either from personal rage, or with a view to inflame the passions of the Americans, and increase the ardour of their pursuit. When they had gained Amboy, they

threw the bridge, which was intended for the Delaware, over the channel which separates the continent from Staten Island, and immediately passed over it their heavy baggage, and all the incumbrances of the army. Some of the troops followed, and every thing was in immediate preparation for the passage of the rest of the army, as if all hope had been lost of its making any further progress in New Jersey. Washington, with all his caution and penetration, allowed himself to be imposed upon by this stratagem of his adversary. He ordered generals Greene, Sullivan, and Maxwell, to pursue the enemy with strong detachments: but the two latter were not in season. Colonel Morgan infested the rear of the retreating army with his cavalry; and Lord Sterling, with colonel Conway, harassed its left flank. The advantages they gained, however, were trifling, as the English marched in good order, and had taken care to place a great part of their forces in the rear guard. Finally, Washington himself, to be more at hand for the protection and support of his advanced parties, descended from the impregnable heights of Middlebrook, and advanced to a place called Quibbletown, six or seven miles nearer to Amboy.

Lord Sterling, with a strong division, occupied the village of Metuckin, lower down towards that city.

General Howe lost no time in endeavouring to profit of the occasion he had opened for himself so shrewdly. In the night of the twenty-fifth of June he drew back his troops from Staten Island to the Continent, and on the morning of the twenty-sixth marched them with great expedition against the Americans. His army formed two distinct divisions. He

had three objects in view. To cut off some of the principal advanced parties of the enemy; to bring his main body to an engagement; and finally, by a rapid movement upon his left, to seize the defiles of the mountains which led to the encampment of Middlebrook, in order to prevent Washington from resuming that strong position. The column of the right, commanded by Lord Cornwallis, was destined to accomplish this last operation; accordingly it moved with extreme celerity, by the way of Woodbridge, to the Scotch Plains. The left, under the immediate orders of general Howe, took the route of Metuckin. It was the intention of the English generals, that these two corps should re-unite beyond the village of Metuckin, upon the road leading from that place to the Scotch Plains, and that thence, having separated anew, the left should rapidly turn against the left flank of the American army, posted at Quibbletown; while the right should endeavour to occupy the hills situated upon the left of the camp of Middlebrook. Four battalions with six pieces of artillery, remained at Bonhampton, to secure Amboy against any unforeseen attack.

According to these dispositions, the English army advanced with a rapid step, sanguine in the hope of victory. But fortune, who was pleased to reserve the Americans for a better destiny, all at once deranged the well-concerted scheme of the British generals. Lord Cornwallis having passed Woodbridge, fell in with a party of seven hundred American riflemen. A warm skirmish ensued, which soon terminated in the flight of the republicans. But the noise of the musketry, and afterwards the fugitives themselves gave

Washington warning of the extreme danger that menaced him. His resolution was immediately taken to recover with celerity what he had abandoned, perhaps, with imprudence. He quitted accordingly his position at Quibbletown, and with all possible expedition re-possessioned himself of the encampment of Middlebrook. When arrived, he instantly detached a strong corps to secure those passes in the mountains upon his left, through which he perceived it was the intention of Lord Cornwallis to approach the heights. This general having dispersed without difficulty the smaller advanced parties of the enemy, fell in at length with Lord Sterling, who, with about three thousand men, strongly posted in a woody country, and well covered by artillery judiciously disposed, manifested a determination to dispute his passage. But the English and Hessians, animated by a mutual emulation, attacked with such impetuosity, that the Americans, unable to withstand the shock, were soon routed on all sides, having sustained besides no inconsiderable loss in men, that of three pieces of brass ordnance. The English continued their pursuit as far as Westfield, but the woods and the intense heat of the weather, prevented its effect. Lord Cornwallis having discovered that the defiles were diligently guarded, and despairing of being able to accomplish his design, returned by the road of Raway, to Amboy. General Howe in like manner, finding his plan entirely defeated by the sudden retreat of Washington into his strong camp of Middlebrook, also marched back to that city. The brigades of Scot and Conway followed the English step by step as far as the frontiers, but



without finding an opening to attack them, so close and cautious was their order of march.

The British generals now reflected that the continuation of hostilities in New Jersey, with a view of penetrating to the Delaware, would not only be fruitless, since the enemy was evidently resolved not to hazard a general engagement, but that it would even be attended with extreme danger, as well from the strength of his positions as from the general enmity of the inhabitants. In effect, the season was already advanced, and there was no more time to be wasted in unprofitable expeditions. They resolved therefore to attack Pennsylvania by way of the sea: thus persevering in their scheme of acting by themselves, and not in conjunction with the Canadian army, which it was known had invested Ticonderoga; and which probably would soon be, if it was not already in possession of that fortress. Accordingly all the troops of general Howe were passed over the channel to Staten Island, and the Americans soon after entered Amboy. The great preparations made by the English in Staten Island, and in all the province of New York, for the embarkation of the army, and the uncertainty of the place against which the storm would be directed, excited a general alarm throughout the continent. Boston, the Hudson river, the Delaware, Chesapeake bay, and even Charleston, in Carolina, were alternately held to be the objects of the expedition. General Washington exerted the utmost vigilance; he maintained a secret correspondence with the republicans in New York, who advised him daily of whatever they saw and heard. In pursuance of this intelligence, he was continually despatching expresses to put those places

upon their guard, which, from immediate information, he supposed for the time to be the threatened point. But herein the English had greatly the advantage, for having the sea always open, they could fall unawares upon the destined place, before the inhabitants could be prepared to resist them, and before the soldiery could possibly come to their succour. But among all the objects that general Howe might have in view, the Americans knew very well, that the two which he must consider of most importance, were consequently the most probable. These were evidently either the conquest of Philadelphia, or the co-operation, by the Hudson river, with the army of Canada. But to which of these two operations he would give the preference, it was not easy to penetrate. In this perplexity, Washington continued stationary in his encampment at Middlebrook, where he could securely persist in his defensive system, and be equally near at hand to march to the succour of Philadelphia, or to ascend the Hudson.

In this posture of things, a movement of general Howe led him to believe that the English had in view the expedition of <sup>3</sup>Albany. Their fleet, moored at Princesbay, a place not far from Amboy, moved higher up towards New York, and came to anchor at Wateringplace, while their whole army, with its munitions and baggage, withdrew from the coast opposite Amboy, and took post at the north point of Staten Island. Washington, thereupon, having posted two regiments of infantry and one of light horse between Newark and Amboy, to cover this part against desultory incursions, moved with the main body of his army to re-occupy his old camp of Morristown. He there

found himself nearer to the Hudson; without being at such a distance from Middlebrook, as to prevent him from promptly resuming that position, if the enemy made any demonstration against New Jersey. He, moreover, detached general Sullivan with a numerous corps to occupy Prompton, upon the road to Peek's-Kill, in order that he might, according to circumstances, either advance to the latter place, or return to Morristown.

In the meantime, it was confidently reported that general Burgoyne, who commanded the British army upon the lakes, had appeared in great force under the walls of Ticonderoga. Washington, therefore, still more persuaded of the intended co-operation of the two armies, under Howe and Burgoyne, upon the banks of the Hudson, ordered general Sullivan to advance immediately and post himself in front of Peek's-Kill, while he proceeded himself as far as Prompton, and afterwards to Clove. The news soon arrived of the surrender of Ticonderoga, and at the same time, intelligence was received that the English fleet was anchored under New York, and even that a great number of transports were come up the Hudson as far as Dobbs-Ferry, where the river widens so as to form a species of lake, called Tappan Bay. These different movements confirmed Washington in his conjectures respecting the project of the enemy; he therefore directed general Sullivan to pass the Hudson, and to intrench himself behind Peek's-Kill upon the left bank. In like manner, Lord Sterling was ordered to cross the river and unite with general Putnam, who guarded the heights that were the object of so much jealousy for the two armies. But, as the

larger ships, and a part of the light vessels, were returned from Wateringplace to Sandy Hook, as if the fleet was preparing for sea, in order to gain the Delaware, and as the whole British army still remained in Staten Island, Washington began to suspect that general Howe meditated embarking with a view to the conquest of Philadelphia.

In the midst of these uncertainties, and while the American general endeavoured to penetrate the intentions of the English, and the latter to deceive him by vain demonstrations upon the banks of the Hudson, the news arrived of an adventure which, though of little importance in itself, produced as much exultation to the Americans as regret to the English. The British troops stationed in Rhode Island were commanded by general Prescott, who, finding himself in an island surrounded by the fleet of the king, and disposing of a force greatly superior to what the enemy could assemble in this quarter, became extremely negligent of his guard. The Americans earnestly desiring to retaliate the capture of general Lee, formed the design of surprising general Prescott in his quarters, and of bringing him off prisoner to the continent. Accordingly, in the night of the tenth of July, lieutenant colonel Barton, at the head of a party of forty of the country militia, well acquainted with the places, embarked in whale boats, and after having rowed a distance of above ten miles, and avoided with great dexterity the numerous vessels of the enemy, landed upon the western coast of Rhode Island, between Newport and Bristol-Ferry. He repaired immediately, with the utmost silence and celerity, to the lodging of general Prescott. They adroitly secured



the sentinels who guarded the door. An aid-de-camp went up into the chamber of the general, who slept quietly, and arrested him, without giving him time even to put on his clothes: they conducted him with equal secrecy and success to the main land. This event afforded the Americans singular satisfaction, as they hoped to exchange their prisoner for general Lee. It was, however, particularly galling to general Prescott, who not long before had been delivered by exchange from the hands of the Americans, after having been taken in the expedition of Canada. In addition to this, he had lately been guilty of an action unworthy of a man of honour, in setting a price upon the head of general Arnold, as if he had been a common out-law and assassin; an insult which Arnold immediately returned, by setting an inferior price upon the person of Prescott. The Congress publicly thanked lieutenant colonel Barton, and presented him with a sword.

Meanwhile, the immensity of the preparations made by general Howe for fitting out the fleet, as well as several movements it executed, strengthened the suspicion of Washington that the demonstrations of the English upon the Hudson were no other than a mere feint. Every day he was more and more convinced that their real plan was to embark and proceed to the attack of Philadelphia, as the capital of the confederation. He therefore retired progressively from Clove, and divided his army into several corps, in order to be able to succour the places attacked with the more expedition. He prayed the Congress to assemble the militia of Pennsylvania, without loss of time, at Chester, and those of the lower counties of Delaware,

at Wilmington. He directed watches to be stationed upon the capes of the Delaware, to keep a look-out, and give early notice of the arrival of the enemy. The governor of New Jersey was exhorted to call out the militia of the districts bordering upon this river, directing them to make head at Gloucester, situated upon the left bank, a little below Philadelphia.

Notwithstanding all the diligence of the brothers Howe in preparing for the embarkation, and the assistance afforded by the crews of more than three hundred vessels, the English could not procure, without extreme difficulty, the articles that were necessary, so that it was not until the twenty-third of July that the fleet and army were able to depart from Sandy Hook. The force that embarked upon this enterprise, consisted of thirty-six British and Hessian battalions, including the light infantry and grenadiers, with a powerful artillery, a New York corps called the Queen's rangers, and a regiment of cavalry. Seventeen battalions, with a regiment of light horse, and the remainder of the new corps of loyalists, were left for the protection of New York and the neighbouring islands. Rhode Island was occupied by seven battalions. It was said that general Howe intended to have taken a greater force with him upon this expedition; but that upon the representation of general Clinton, who was to command in his absence, of the danger to which the islands would be exposed, from the extensiveness of the coasts, and the great number of posts that were necessarily to be maintained, he acknowledged the force of these considerations by re-landing several regiments.

Thus, England, by the error of her ministers, or of her generals, had in America, instead of a great and powerful army, only three separate corps, from which individually no certain victory could be expected. At this moment, in effect, one of these corps was in Canada, another in the islands of New York and Rhode Island, and the third was on its way by sea, destined to act against Philadelphia. But perhaps it was imagined that in a country like that which furnished the theatre of this war, continually interrupted by lakes, rivers, forests, and inaccessible places, three light armies were likely to operate with more effect separately, than united in a single mass, incumbered by the number of troops, and multitude of baggage. This excuse would, perhaps, be valid, if the English generals, instead of operating as they did, without concert and without a common plan, had mutually assisted each other with their counsels and forces to strike a decisive blow, and arrive together at the same object.

However this may be viewed, the rapid progress of general Burgoyne towards the sources of the Hudson, the apprehension of an approaching attack on the part of general Howe, and the uncertainty of the point it menaced, all concurred to maintain a general agitation and alarm throughout the American continent. Great battles were expected, and no one doubted they would prove as fierce and sanguinary, as they were to be important and decisive.





## BOOK EIGHTH.

1777.

THE British ministers, as we have before related, had long since formed the scheme of opening a way to New York by means of an army, which should descend from the lakes to the banks of the Hudson, and unite in the vicinity of Albany with the whole, or with a part of that commanded by general Howe. All intercourse would thus have been cut off between the eastern and western provinces, and it was believed that victory from this moment, could no longer be doubtful. The former, where the inhabitants were the most exasperated, crushed by an irresistible force, would have been deprived of all means of succouring the latter. These consequently, however remote from the Hudson, would also have been constrained to submit to the fortune of the conqueror, terrified by the reduction of the other provinces, abounding with loyalists, who would have joined the victor, and also swayed perhaps by a jealousy of the power of New England, and irritated by the reflection that it was her obstinacy which had been the principal cause of their present calamities. This expedition, besides, presented few difficulties, since with the exception of a short march, it might be executed entirely by water. The French themselves had attempted it in the course of the last war. It was hoped that it would have been already effected by the close of the preceding

year; but it had failed in consequence of the obstacles encountered upon the lakes, the lateness of the season, and especially because while general Carleton advanced upon Ticonderoga and consequently towards the Hudson, general Howe, instead of proceeding up the river to join him, had carried his arms to the west, against New Jersey.

At present, however, this scheme had acquired new favour, and what in preceding years had been only an incidental part of the plan of campaign, was now become its main object. The entire British nation had founded the most sanguine expectations upon this arrangement; nothing else seemed to be talked of among them but this expedition of Canada, which was shortly to bring about the total subjection of America. The junction of the two armies appeared quite sufficient to attain this desired object; the Americans, it was said, cannot oppose it without coming to a general battle, and in such case, there can exist no doubt of the result. The ministers had taken all the measures which they deemed essential to the success of so important an enterprise; they had furnished with profusion whatever the generals themselves had required or suggested. General Burgoyne, an officer of uncontested ability, possessed of an exact knowledge of the country, and animated by an ardent thirst for military glory, had repaired to England during the preceding winter, where he had submitted to the ministers the plan of this expedition, and had concerted with them the means of carrying it into effect. The ministry, besides their confidence in his genius and spirit, placed great hope in that eager desire of renown by which they knew him to be goaded in-

cessantly; they gave him therefore the direction of all the operations. In this appointment, little regard was manifested for the rank and services of general Carleton; what he had already done in Canada, seemed to entitle him to conduct to its conclusion the enterprise he had commenced. No one, assuredly, could pretend to govern that province with more prudence and firmness. He possessed also an accurate knowledge of the country, as he had resided in Canada for several years, and had already made war there. But perhaps the ministers were dissatisfied with his retreat from Ticonderoga, and the repugnance he was said to have manifested to employ the savages. Perhaps also, his severity in the exercise of his command had drawn upon him the ill-will of some officers, who endeavoured to represent his actions in an unfavourable light. Burgoyne, impatient to make his profit of the occasion, was arrived in England, where, being well received at court, and besieging the ministers with his importunities, he made such magnificent promises, that in prejudice of Carleton he was entrusted with the command of all the troops of Canada. But the governor, finding himself, contrary to his expectation, divested of all military power, and restricted in his functions, requested leave to resign.

General Burgoyne arrived at Quebec in the beginning of the month of May, and immediately set himself to push forward the business of his mission. He displayed an extreme activity in completing all the preparations which might conduce to the success of the enterprise. Meanwhile, several ships arrived from England, bringing arms, munitions, and field equipage, in great abundance. General Carleton,

exhibiting an honorable example of moderation and patriotism, seconded Burgoyne with great diligence and energy: he exerted in his favour not only the authority with which he was still invested as governor, but even the influence he had with his friends and numerous partisans. His zealous co-operation proved of signal utility, and every thing was soon in preparation for an expedition which was to decide the event of the war, and the fate of America. The regular force placed at the disposal of general Burgoyne, consisting of British and German troops, amounted to upwards of seven thousand men, exclusive of a corps of artillery, composed of about five hundred. To these should be added a detachment of seven hundred rangers, under colonel St. Leger, destined to make an incursion into the country of the Mohawks, and to seize Fort Stanwix, otherwise called Fort Schuyler. This corps consisted of some companies of English infantry, of recruits from New York, of Hanau chasseurs, and of a party of Canadians and savages. According to the plan of the ministers and of the general himself, the principal army of Burgoyne was to be joined by two thousand Canadians, including hatchetmen, and other workmen, whose services, it was foreseen, would be much needed to render the ways practicable. A sufficient number of seamen had been assembled, for manning the transports upon the lakes and upon the Hudson. Besides the Canadians that were to be immediately attached to the army, many others were called upon to scour the woods in the frontiers, and to occupy the intermediate posts between the army which advanced towards the Hudson, and that which remained for the protection



of Canada; the latter amounted, including the Highland emigrants, to upwards of three thousand men. These dispositions were necessary, partly to intercept the communication between the enemy and the ill affected in Canada; partly to prevent desertion, to procure intelligence, to transmit orders, and for various other duties essential to the security and tranquillity of the country in the rear of the army. But these were not the only services exacted from the Canadians: a great number of them were assembled to complete the fortifications at Sorel, St. Johns, Chambly, and Isle-au-Noix. Finally, they were required to furnish horses and carts, to convey from the different repositories to the army all the provisions, artillery stores, and other effects of which it might have need. Under this last head was comprehended a large quantity of uniforms, destined for the loyalists, who, it was not doubted, would after victory flock from all quarters to the royal camp.

But it was also thought that the aid of the savages would be of great advantage to the cause of the king; the government had therefore ordered general Carleton to use his utmost weight and influence to assemble a body of a thousand Indians, and even more if it was possible. His humanity, which could ill endure the cruelty of these barbarians, and experience, which had taught him that they were rather an incumbrance than an aid, in regular operations, would have induced him to decline their alliance; but in obedience to his orders, he exerted an active zeal in bringing them forward to support the expedition. His success was answerable to his efforts. Whether by the influence of his name, which was extreme among these tribes,

from their avidity to grasp the presents of the English, or from their innate thirst for blood and plunder, their remote as well as near nations poured forth their warriors in such abundance, that the British generals became apprehensive that their numbers might render them rather a clog than any real addition of strength to the army. They hastened therefore to dismiss such as appeared the least proper for war, or the most cruel or intractable. Never, perhaps, was an army of no greater force than this accompanied by so formidable a train of artillery, as well from the number of pieces, as from the skill of those who served it. This powerful apparatus was considered eminently requisite to disperse without effort an undisciplined enemy in the open country, or to dislodge him from strong and difficult places. The generals who seconded Burgoyne in this expedition, were all able and excellent officers. The principal were, major general Phillips, of the artillery, who had distinguished himself in the wars of Germany; the brigadier generals Frazer, Powel, and Hamilton, with the Brunswick major general Baron Reidesel, and brigadier general Specht. The whole army shared in the ardour and hopes of its chiefs; not a doubt was entertained of an approaching triumph, and the conquest of America.

The preparations being at length completed, and all the troops, as well national as auxiliary, having arrived, general Burgoyne proceeded to encamp near the little river Bouquet, upon the west bank of Lake Champlain, at no great distance to the north of Crown Point. As the time for commencing hostilities was near at hand, and dreading the consequences of the

barbarity of the savages, which, besides the dishonour it reflected upon the British arms, might prove essentially prejudicial to the success of the expedition, he resolved to assemble those barbarians in congress, and afterwards, in compliance with their customs, to give them a warfeast. He made a speech to them on that occasion, calculated, in terms of singular energy, to excite their ardour in the common cause, and at the same time to repress their ferocious propensities. To this end, he endeavoured to explain to them the distinction between a war carried on against a common enemy, in which the whole country and people were hostile, and the present, in which the faithful were intermixed with rebels, and traitors with friends. He recommended and strictly enjoined them, that they should put none to death but such as actually opposed them with arms in their hands; that old men, women, children and prisoners, should be held sacred from the knife or tomahawk, even in the heat of action; that they should scalp only those whom they had slain in battle: but that under no pretext, or colour of prevarication, they should scalp the wounded, or even the dying, and much less kill them, by way of evading the injunction. He promised them a due reward for every prisoner they brought him in, but denounced the severest penalties against those who should scalp the living.

While, on the one hand, general Burgoyne attempted to mitigate the natural ferocity of the Indians, he endeavoured, on the other, to render them an object of terror with those who persisted in resistance.—For this purpose, on the twenty-ninth of June, he issued a proclamation from his camp at Putnam Creek,

wherein he magnified the force of the British armies and fleets which were about to embrace and to crush every part of America. He painted with great vivacity of colouring, the excesses committed by the chiefs of the rebellion, as well as the deplorable condition to which they had reduced the colonies. He reminded the Americans of the arbitrary imprisonments and oppressive treatment with which those had been persecuted who had shown themselves faithful to their king and country; he enlarged upon the tyrannic cruelties inflicted by the assemblies and committees upon the most quiet subjects, without distinction of age or sex, for the sole offence, and often for the sole suspicion of having adhered in principle to the government under which they were born, under which they had lived for so long a time, and to which, by every tie divine and human, they owed allegiance. He instanced the violence offered to their consciences, by the exaction of oaths and of military services, in support of an usurpation they abhorred. He had come, he continued with a numerous and veteran army, and in the name of the king, to put an end to such unheard-of enormities. He invited the well disposed to join him, and assist in redeeming their country from slavery, and in the re-establishment of legal government. He promised protection and security to all those who should continue quietly to pursue their occupations; who should abstain from removing their cattle, or corn, or any species of forage; from breaking up the bridges, or obstructing the roads, and in a word, from committing any act of hostility: and who, on the contrary, should furnish the camp with all sorts of provisions, assured as they might be, of receiving the full value thereof,



in solid coin. But against the contumacious, and those who should persist in rebellion, he denounced the most terrible war: he warned them that justice and vengeance were about to overtake them, accompanied with devastation, famine, and all the calamities in their train. Finally, he admonished them not to flatter themselves, that distance or coverts could screen them from his pursuit, for he had only to let loose the thousands of Indians that were under his direction to discover in their most secret retreats, and to punish with condign severity, the hardened enemies of Great Britain and America.

This manifesto, so little worthy of the general of a civilized nation, was justly censured, not only in the two houses of parliament and throughout Great Britain, but excited the indignation of every moderate and generous mind in all Europe. In vain did Burgoyne attempt to excuse himself, by pretending that he had merely intended to intimidate the people he was about to combat: he should have employed for this purpose the arms that are in use among polished nations, and not the menaces appropriate to barbarians. Moreover his soldiers, and especially the savages, were already but too much disposed to ravage and massacre, and to take in earnest what their general would have it believed he only announced as an artifice or feint. This was not a race to be sported with, and the thing itself was no light matter. Be this as it may, the proclamation produced an effect entirely contrary to its author's expectations. That fearless people who inhabit New England, far from allowing it to terrify them, were much inclined to deride it: they never met each other without con-

temptuously enquiring what vent the vaunting general of Britain had found for his pompous and ridiculous declamations? These preliminary dispositions accomplished, general Burgoyne made a short stop at Crown Point, for the establishment of magazines, an hospital, and other necessary services, and then proceeded with all his troops to invest Ticonderoga. The right wing took the western bank of the lake, the left advanced upon the eastern, and the centre was embarked upon the lake itself. The reduction of this fortress, without which it was impossible for the army to advance a step further, was of course the first object of its operations. Art had added to the natural strength of Ticonderoga, and the unfortunate issue of the attempt made upon it by the British in 1758, when occupied by the French, was still fresh in remembrance. But general Burgoyne, either impatient to avenge this affront, or because the ardour of his army seemed to promise him an easy triumph over the most formidable obstacles, persuaded himself that its reduction would detain him but a very short time. He arrived under the walls of the place on the first of July. At the same time, the detachment of light troops which, as we have mentioned above, was destined to scour the country of the Mohawks, under the command of Sir John Johnson and colonel St. Leger, advanced from Oswego, in order to attack Fort Stanwix. It was intended after the acquisition of this fortress, to occupy the ground which extends between the same and Fort Edward, situated upon the banks of the Hudson, with a view to intercept the retreat of the garrison of Ticonderoga, and to rejoin the main army as it advanced.

The American army, destined to oppose the progress of the royal troops, and to defend Ticonderoga, was altogether insufficient. The garrison had experienced such a diminution during the winter, that it was much feared the English would seize that fortress by assault. The spring being arrived, and the rumours of the enemy's approach receiving daily confirmation, general Schuyler, to whom the Congress had recently given the command of all the troops in that quarter, employed every possible means to procure re-enforcements. He desired and hoped to assemble an army of at least ten thousand men, as a smaller number would not be adequate to guard his extensive line of defence. But the affair of recruiting proceeded very tardily. The inhabitants manifested at this time an extreme backwardness to enlist under the banners of Congress, whether from a natural coldness, or because the policy of the English, or the persuasion of the American generals themselves, had given currency to an opinion that the royal army was not to undertake the siege of Ticonderoga; but, that embarking upon the Saint Lawrence, it would proceed by sea, to operate its junction with that under general Howe. Hence, when the royal troops made their sudden appearance under the walls of Ticonderoga, the troops of general Schuyler amounted, at the utmost, to not over five thousand men, including the garrison of the fortress, which consisted of little above three thousand, a number quite inadequate to the defence of so vast a circuit of walls, and of so many outworks.

Ticonderoga lies upon the western bank of that narrow inlet, by which the water from Lake George is conveyed to Lake Champlain. Crown Point lies

about a dozen miles further north, at the opposite extremity of that inlet. The first of these places is situated on an angle of land, which is surrounded on three sides by water, and that covered by steep and difficult rocks. A great part of the fourth side was covered by a deep morass, and where that fails, the old French lines still continued as a defence on the north-west quarter. The Americans had strengthened these lines with additional works and a block-house. In like manner, on the left, towards Lake George, and at the place where the saw-mills were situated, they had erected new works and block-houses, as also to the right of the French lines, in the direction of Lake Champlain. On the eastern bank of the inlet, and opposite to Ticonderoga, rises a high circular hill, to which the Americans gave the name of Mount Independence. On the summit of this hill is a small plain, where they had erected a star fort: the sides and foot of the mountain were strengthened with works to the water's edge, and the intrenchments well lined with heavy cannon. In order to maintain a free communication between the fortress and Mount Independence, the Americans had constructed a bridge over the inlet, a work of difficult and laborious execution. The bridge was supported on twenty-two timber piers of vast dimensions, sunken at nearly equal distance; the spaces between these were filled with separate floats, each about fifty feet long and twelve feet wide, and the whole was held together by chains and rivets of immense size. To prevent the enemy from approaching with his numerous ships, and attempting to force the bridge, it was defended on the side towards Lake Champlain



by a boom composed of very large pieces of timber, joined together with iron bolts and chains of prodigious thickness. Thus, not only the passage was kept open between these two posts, but all access by water from the northern side was totally cut off. The part of the inlet which is below Ticonderoga, and which may be considered as the head of Lake Champlain, widens considerably and becomes navigable to vessels of burthen; but the other part, which is above the fortress, and is the issue of Lake George, besides being narrow, is also rendered impracticable by shallows and falls. But on its arrival at Ticonderoga, it is joined by a great body of water on the eastern side, called, in this part, South river, and higher up towards its source, as we have already said in a preceding book, it is known under the appellation of Wood-Creek. The confluence of these waters, at Ticonderoga forms a small bay to the southward of the bridge of communication, and the point of land formed by their junction, is composed of a mountain called Sugar-Hill, otherwise known by the name of Mount Defiance. From this mountain the fort of Ticonderoga is overlooked and effectually commanded. This circumstance occasioned a consultation among the Americans, in which it was proposed to fortify that mountain; but finding themselves too feeble to man the fortifications they had already erected, they renounced the design. It was likewise hoped, that the extreme steepness of its ascent, and the, savage irregularity of the ground on its summit and sides, would prevent the enemy from attempting to occupy it, at least with artillery. The defence of Ticonderoga was committed to the charge

of general St. Clair, with a garrison of three thousand men, one third of whom were militia from the northern provinces. But they were ill equipped, and worse armed, particularly in the article of bayonets, an arm so essential in the defence of lines: not having one to ten of their number.

On the second of July, the British right wing under general Phillips, having appeared upon the left flank of the fortress, St. Clair, too weak to defend all the outworks, or believing the enemy stronger than he was in reality, immediately ordered the evacuation of the intrenchments which had been erected upon the banks of the inlet of Lake George, above Ticonderoga. This order was executed with promptitude, not however without having first burnt or destroyed whatever was found in this part, and especially, the block-houses and saw-mills. General Phillips profiting of the occasion, took possession, without the least opposition on the part of the besieged, of a post of great importance, called Mount Hope, which besides commanding their lines in a great and dangerous degree, totally cut off their communication with Lake George. Mount Hope being thus secured, the British corps which had advanced upon the western bank of Lake Champlain, extended itself from the mountain to the lake, so as completely to invest the fort on the part of the north west, and to cut off its communication with the land. The German column, commanded by Reidesel, which had marched along the eastern shore of the lake, was also arrived under the walls of the fortress, and was established at Three-miles Point, extending itself from the bank of the lake, behind Mount Independence, as far as East Creek. From this place,

by stretching more forward, it might easily occupy the ground comprehended between East Creek and South River, or Wood Creek, and thus deprive the Americans of their communication with Skeensborough by the right bank of the latter stream. But the most interesting post for the English, was that of Mount Defiance, which so completely commanded the fortress that it was beyond all doubt, if batteries were planted there, that the garrison must immediately evacuate the place, or surrender at discretion. This eminence being therefore attentively examined by the British generals, they believed it possible, though with infinite labour and difficulty, to establish their artillery upon its summit. This arduous task was immediately undertaken and pushed with such spirit and industry, that on the fifth day, the road was completed, the artillery mounted, and ready to open its fire on the following morning. The garrison were afraid to sally out, in order to annoy, or even to retard the besiegers, in these works; they were therefore in danger of losing all way of retreat. St. Clair knew very well that after the loss of Mount Defiance, there was no longer any resource for Ticonderoga, and that he could not even aspire to the honour of a short resistance. The only way of escape that he had left, was the narrow passage between East Creek and Wood Creek, which Reidesel could shut up at any moment. In these circumstances, St. Clair, having convened in council the principal officers of the garrison, represented to them the critical situation in which they were placed, thus pressed by the enemy, and upon the very point of being hemmed in on every side. He asked them if they did not think it would be proper to evacuate the

place without loss of time; they were all in favour of the measure.

It is impossible to blame this determination of the council of war of Ticonderoga: for, independently of the progress already made by the besiegers, the garrison was so feeble that it would not have been able to defend one half of the works, or to sustain, for any length of time, the consequent excess of fatigue. By remaining, therefore, the fortress and the garrison were both lost, by departing, only the first, and the second might be saved. It was known also to St. Clair, that general Schuyler, who was then at Fort Edward, far from being able to bring him succour, had not even forces sufficient for his own defence. But here an objection presents itself, which has never yet been satisfactorily answered. Since the American generals found their force insufficient for the defence of the place, why did they not evacuate it in time, and when they might have done so with safety? They would thus have been sure of saving at least their baggage, stores and artillery. If they were deceived respecting the real force of the enemy, and therefore, at first, believed themselves able to resist him, even this error, could only have proceeded from a defect of military skill, so extraordinary as to admit of no excuse.

However it was, having taken their resolution, they thought of nothing but executing it with promptitude, and in the night of the fifth of July, they put themselves in motion. General St. Clair led the vanguard, and colonel Francis the rear. The soldiers had received orders to maintain a profound silence, and to take with them sustenance for eight days. The



baggage of the army, the furniture of the hospital, with all the sick, and such artillery, stores and provisions as the necessity of the time would permit, were embarked with a strong detachment under colonel Long, on board above two hundred batteaux and five armed gallies. On beginning to strike the tents, the lights were extinguished. These preparations were executed with much order at Ticonderoga; but not without some confusion at Mount Independence. The general rendezvous was appointed at Skeenesborough, the batteaux proceeding under convoy of the gallies, up Wood Creek, and the main army taking its route by the way of Castletown, upon the right bank of that stream. St. Clair issued from Ticonderoga at two in the morning; Francis at four. The English had no suspicion of what was passing, and the march commenced under the most favourable auspices. But all at once a house which took fire on Mount Independence, roused by its glare of light the attention of the English, who immediately perceived all that had taken place. The Americans finding themselves discovered, could not but feel a certain agitation. They marched, however, though in some disorder, as far as Hubbardston, where they halted to refresh themselves, and rally the dispersed. But the English were not idle. General Frazer, at the head of a strong detachment of grenadiers and light troops, commenced an eager pursuit by land, upon the right bank of Wood Creek. General Reidesel, behind him, rapidly advanced with his Brunswickers, either to support the English, or to act separately, as occasion might require. General Burgoyne determined to pursue the enemy by water. But

it was first necessary to destroy the boom and bridge which the Americans had constructed in front of Ticonderoga. The British seamen and artificers immediately engaged in the operation, and in less time than it would have taken to describe their structure, those works, which had cost so much labour and so vast an expense, were cut through and demolished. The passage thus cleared, the ships of Burgoyne immediately entered Wood-Creek, and proceeded with extreme rapidity in search of the enemy; all was in movement at once upon land and water. By three in the afternoon the van of the British squadron, composed of gun-boats, came up with and attacked the American gallies near Skeenesborough-Falls. In the meantime, three regiments which had been landed at South-Bay, ascended and passed a mountain with great expedition, in order to turn the enemy above Wood-Creek, to destroy his works at the falls of Skeenesborough, and thus to cut off his retreat to Fort Anne. But the Americans eluded this stroke by the rapidity of their flight. The British frigates having joined the van, the gallies, already hard pressed by the gun-boats, were completely overpowered. Two of them surrendered; three were blown up. The Americans now despaired: having set fire to their works, mills, and batteaux, and otherwise destroyed what they were unable to burn, they escaped as well as they could up Wood-Creek, without halting till they reached Fort Anne. Their loss was considerable; for the batteaux they burnt were loaded with baggage, provisions and munitions, as necessary to their sustenance as to military operations. The corps which had set out by land was in no better situation.

The van-guard, conducted by St. Clair, was arrived at Castletown, thirty miles distant from Ticonderoga, and twelve from Skeenesborough; the rear, commanded by colonels Francis and Warner, had rested the night of the sixth at Hubbardston, six miles below Castletown, towards Ticonderoga.

At five o'clock in the morning of the seventh, the English column under general Frazer made its appearance. The Americans were strongly posted, and appeared disposed to defend themselves. Frazer, though inferior in point of number, had great confidence in the valour of his troops. He also expected every moment to be joined by general Reidesel; and being apprehensive that the enemy might escape if he delayed, he ordered the attack immediately. The battle was long and sanguinary. The Americans being commanded by valiant officers, behaved with great spirit and firmness; but the English displayed an equal obstinacy. After several shocks with alternate success, the latter began to fall back in disorder; but their leaders rallied them anew, and led them to a furious charge with the bayonet: the Americans were shaken by its impetuosity. At this critical moment, general Reidesel arrived at the head of his column, composed of light troops and some grenadiers. He immediately took part in the action. The Americans, overpowered by numbers, fled on all sides, leaving their brave commander, with many other officers, and upwards of two hundred soldiers, dead on the field. About the same number, besides colonel Hale, and seventeen officers of inferior rank, were made prisoners. Above six hundred were supposed to be wounded, many of whom, deprived of all

succour, perished miserably in the woods. The loss of the royal troops in dead and wounded amounted to about one hundred and eighty. General St. Clair, upon intelligence of this discomfiture, and that of the disaster at Skeenesborough, which was brought him at the same time by an officer of one of the gallies, apprehending that he should be interrupted if he proceeded towards Fort Anne, struck into the woods on his left, uncertain whether he should repair to New England and the upper part of Connecticut, or to Fort Edward. But being joined two days after at Manchester by the remains of the corps of colonel Warner, and having collected the fugitives, he proceeded to Fort Edward, in order to unite with general Schuyler.

While these events were passing on the left, the English generals resolved to drive the Americans from Fort Anne, situated higher up towards the sources of Wood-Creek. Colonel Hill was detached for this purpose from Skeenesborough, and to facilitate his operations, the greatest exertions were made in carrying batteaux over the falls of that place; which enabled him to attack the fort also by water. Upon intelligence that the Americans had a numerous garrison there, brigadier Powell was sent with two regiments to the succour of colonel Hill. The American colonel Long, who with a great part of his corps had escaped the destruction of the boats at the falls, commanded the garrison of Fort Anne. Having heard that the enemy was approaching, he gallantly sallied out to receive him. The English defended themselves with courage, but the Americans had already nearly surrounded them. Colonel Hill finding himself too hard pressed, endeavoured to take a stronger



position. This movement was executed with as much order as intrepidity, amidst the reiterated and furious charges of the enemy. The combat had lasted for more than two hours, and victory was still doubtful, when all at once the Americans heard the horrible yells of the savages, who approached; and being informed at the same instant that the corps of Powell was about to fall upon them, they retired to Fort Anne. Not thinking themselves in safety even there, they set it on fire, and withdrew to Fort Edward on the river Hudson.

General Schuyler was already in this place, and St. Clair arrived there on the twelfth, with the remains of the garrison of Ticonderoga. It would be difficult to describe the hardships and misery which these troops had suffered, from the badness of the weather and the want of covering and provisions, in their circuitous march through the woods, from Castletown to Fort Edward. After the arrival of these corps, and of the fugitives, who came in by companies, all the American troops amounted to little over four thousand men, including the militia. They were in want of all necessaries, and even of courage, by the effect of their recent reverses. The Americans lost in these different actions, no less than one hundred and twenty-eight pieces of artillery, with a prodigious quantity of warlike stores, baggage and provisions, particularly of flour, which they left in Ticonderoga and Mount Independence. To increase the calamity, the whole of the neighbouring country was struck with terror by this torrent of disasters, and the inhabitants thought more of providing for their own safety, than of flying to the succour of their country in jeopardy.

In a conjuncture so alarming, general Schuyler neglected none of those cares which become an able commander, and an excellent citizen. Already, while the enemy was assembling at Skeenesborough, he had endeavoured to interrupt, with all manner of obstacles, the navigation of Wood Creek, from that place to Fort Anne, where it determined even for batteaux. The country between Fort Anne and Fort Edward (a distance of only sixteen miles) is excessively rough and savage; the ground is unequal, and broken with numerous creeks, and with wide and deep morasses.

General Schuyler neglected no means of adding by art to the difficulties with which nature seemed to have purposely interdicted this passage. Trenches were opened, the roads and paths obstructed, the bridges broken up; and in the only practicable defiles, immense trees were cut in such a manner, on both sides of the road, as to fall across and lengthwise, which, with their branches interwoven, presented an insurmountable barrier: in a word, this wilderness, of itself so horrible, was thus rendered almost absolutely impenetrable. Nor did the American general rest satisfied with these precautions; he directed the cattle to be removed to the most distant places, and the stores and baggage from Fort George to Fort Edward, that articles of such necessity for his troops, might not fall into the power of the enemy. He urgently demanded that all the regiments of regular troops found in the adjacent provinces, should be sent, without delay, to join him; he also made earnest and frequent calls upon the militia of New England and of New York. He likewise exerted his utmost endeavours to procure himself recruits in the vicinity

of Fort Edward and the city of Albany; the great influence he enjoyed with the inhabitants, gave him, in this quarter, all the success he could desire. Finally, to retard the progress of the enemy, he resolved to threaten his left flank: accordingly he detached colonel Warner, with his regiment, into the state of Vermont, with orders to assemble the militia of the country, and to make incursions towards Ticonderoga. In brief, general Schuyler neglected no means that could tend to impede or defeat the projects of the enemy.

While he thus occupied himself with so much ardour, general Burgoyne was detained at Skeenesborough, as well by the difficulty of the ground he had to pass, as because he chose to wait for the arrival of tents, baggage, artillery and provisions, so absolutely necessary before plunging himself into these fearful solitudes. His army at this time was disposed in the following manner: the right occupied the heights of Skeenesborough, the German division of Reidesel forming its extremity; the left, composed of Brunswickers, extending into the plain, rested upon the river of Castletown, and the brigade of Frazer formed the centre. The regiment of Hessians, of Hanau, was posted at the source of East Creek, to protect the camp of Castletown, and the batteaux upon Wood Creek, against the incursions of Colonel Warner. In the mean time, indefatigable labour was exerted in removing all obstacles to the navigation of this stream, as also in clearing passages, and opening roads through the country about Fort Anne. The design of Burgoyne was, that the main body of the army should penetrate through the wilderness we have just

described, to Fort Edward, while another column, embarking at Ticonderoga, should proceed up Lake George, reduce the fort of that name, situated at its extremity, and afterwards rejoin him at Fort Edward. Upon the acquisition of Fort George, the stores, provisions and necessaries were to be conveyed to the camp by way of the lake, the navigation of which is easier and more expeditious than that of Wood Creek, and there was besides, a good wagon-road between the two forts. Such were the efforts exerted by the two belligerents; the English believing themselves secure of victory; the Americans hardly venturing to hope for better fortune. Nothing could exceed the consternation and terror which the victory of Ticonderoga, and the subsequent successes of Burgoyne, spread throughout the American provinces, nor the joy and exultation they excited in England. The arrival of these glad tidings was celebrated by the most brilliant rejoicings at court, and welcomed with the same enthusiasm by all those who desired the unconditional reduction of America. They already announced the approaching termination of this glorious war; they openly declared it a thing impossible, that the rebels should ever recover from the shock of their recent losses, as well of men as of arms and of military stores; and especially that they should ever regain their courage and reputation, which, in war, contribute to success, as much, at least, as arms themselves. Even the ancient reproaches of cowardice were renewed against the Americans, and their own partisans abated much of the esteem they had borne them. They were more than half disposed to pronounce the colonists unworthy to defend that liberty.



which they gloried in, with so much complacency. The ministers, pluming themselves upon their good fortune, marched through the court as if to exact the tribute of felicitation. No praises were refused them; their obstinacy was denominated constancy; their projects, which had appeared full of temerity, were now acknowledged to have been dictated by the profoundest sagacity: and their pertinacity in rejecting every proposition for accommodation, was pronounced to have been a noble zeal for the interests of the state. The military counsels of the ministers having resulted in such brilliant success, even those who had heretofore inclined for the ways of conciliation, welcomed with all sail this prosperous breeze of fortune, and appeared now rather to wish the reduction, than the voluntary reunion of the Americans.

But in America, the loss of the fortress and the lakes, which were considered as the keys of the United States, appeared the more alarming, as it was unexpected; for, the greater part of the inhabitants, as well as the Congress, and Washington himself, were impressed with a belief, that the British army in Canada was weaker, and that of general Schuyler stronger, than they were in effect. They entertained no doubt in particular, that the garrison left in Ticonderoga was sufficient for its entire security. Malignity began to assail the reputation of the officers of the northern army; its envenomed shafts were especially aimed at St. Clair. Schuyler himself, that able general and devoted patriot, whose long services had only been repaid by long ingratitude, escaped not the serpent tongue of calumny. As the friend of the New Yorkers, he was no favourite with the inhabitants of New

England, and the latter were those who aspersed him with the most bitterness. The Congress, for the honour of their arms, and to satisfy the people, decreed an inquiry into the conduct of the officers, and that successors should be despatched to relieve them in command. The result of the investigation was favourable to them: by the intercession of Washington, the appointment of successors was waived. But what was not a little remarkable, is, that in the midst of all these disasters, no sort of disposition to submit appeared in any quarter. No public body discovered symptoms of dismay, and if a few individuals betrayed a want of firmness, they were chiefly persons without influence, and without character.

Meanwhile, the Congress apprehending that the news of these sinister events might operate to the prejudice of the negotiations opened with the court of France, and, as it too often happens, being more tender of their own interests than of the reputation of their generals, they hesitated not to disguise the truth of facts, by throwing upon St. Clair the imputation of imbecility and misconduct. Their agents were accordingly instructed to declare that all these reverses were to be attributed to those officers who, with a garrison of five thousand men, well armed and equipped, had wanted capacity to defend an almost impregnable fortress; that, as for the rest, the Americans, far from being discouraged, only waited for the occasion to avenge their defeats. Washington, who in this crisis as in all the preceding, manifested an unshaken constancy, was entirely occupied in providing means to confirm the tottering state of the republic: he exerted the utmost diligence in sending re-enforcements

and necessaries to the army of Schuyler. The artillery and warlike stores were expedited from Massachusetts. General Lincoln, a man of great influence in New England, was sent there, to encourage the militia to enlist. Arnold, in like manner, repaired thither: it was thought his ardour might serve to inspire the dejected troops. Colonel Morgan, an officer whose brilliant valour we have already had occasion to remark, was ordered to take the same direction with his troop of light horse. All these measures, conceived with prudence and executed with promptitude, produced the natural effect. The Americans recovered by degrees their former ardour, and their army increased from day to day.

During this interval, general Burgoyne exerted himself with extreme diligence in opening a passage from Fort Anne to Fort Edward. But notwithstanding the ardour with which the whole army engaged in the work, their progress was exceedingly slow, so formidable were the obstacles which nature as well as art had thrown in their way. Besides having to remove the fallen trees with which the enemy had obstructed the roads, they had no less than forty bridges to construct, and many others to repair. Finally, the army encountered so many impediments in measuring this inconsiderable space, that it could not arrive upon the banks of the Hudson, near Fort Edward, until the thirtieth of July. The Americans, either because they were too feeble to oppose the enemy, or that Fort Edward was no better than a ruin, unsusceptible of defence, or finally, because they were apprehensive that colonel St. Leger, after the reduction of Fort Stanwix might descend by the left bank

of the Mohawk to the Hudson, and thus intercept their retreat, retired lower down to Stillwater, where they threw up intrenchments. At the same time they evacuated Fort George, having previously burned their vessels upon the lake, and interrupted in various places the road which leads thence to Fort Edward. The route from Ticonderoga to this fortress by Lake George was thus left entirely open by the republicans. The English upon their arrival on the Hudson river, which had been so long the object of their wishes, and which had been at length attained at the expense of so many toils and hardships, were seized with a dilirium of joy, and persuaded themselves that victory could now no longer escape them. But ere it was long, their brilliant hopes were succeeded by anxiety and embarrassment. All the country around them was hostile, and they could obtain no provisions but what they drew from Ticonderoga. Accordingly, from the thirtieth of July to the fifteenth of August, the English army was continually employed in forwarding batteaux, provisions and ammunition, from Fort George to the first navigable part of the Hudson, a distance of about eighteen miles. The toil was excessive in this operation, and the advantage gained by it in no degree an equivalent to the expense of labour and time. The roads were in some parts steep, and in others required great repairs. Of the horses that were expected from Canada, scarcely one third were yet arrived, and it was with difficulty that fifty pair of oxen had been procured. Heavy and continual rains added to these impediments; and notwithstanding all the efforts which had been used, it was found difficult to supply the army with provisions for its current con-



sumption, and utterly impracticable in this mode to establish such a magazine as would enable it to prosecute the further operations of the campaign. On the fifteenth, there was not above four days' provision in store, nor above ten batteaux in the Hudson river.

General Burgoyne was severely censured, as well for having lost so much time by crossing the wilderness of Fort Anne, as for having exposed himself to want subsistence in his camp at Fort Edward. It was alleged that, instead of entangling himself in those dangerous defiles, he should, after the occupation of Skeenesborough and the total discomfiture of the enemy's army, have returned immediately down the South river to Ticonderoga, where he might again have embarked the army on Lake George and proceeded to the fort which takes its name; this being reduced, a broad firm road lay before him to Fort Edward. In this manner, it was added, would have been avoided delays as detrimental to the British army, as propitious to the Americans. Thus, it was maintained, the army might have made itself master of Albany, before the enemy would have had time to recollect himself. But, in justification of Burgoyne, it was advanced, that a retrograde motion in the height of victory, would have diminished the spirit of his troops, and revived the hopes of the enemy; that the Americans would undoubtedly have made a stand at Fort George, and in the meantime would have broken up the road leading to Fort Edward; that by passing, as he had done, through the desert of Fort Anne, besides inuring his troops to the war of the woods, a war so embarrassing and difficult, he compelled the enemy to evacuate Fort

George without striking a blow; that having already opened himself a road, it was to be hoped the Americans would not interrupt the other; that the route by land left the vessels, which would have been required for the transport of the troops, upon Lake George, at liberty to be employed in that of arms, ammunition, provisions, and baggage. Finally, it was represented, that by preferring the way upon the left to that upon the right by Lake George, he had enabled himself to detach a strong corps under the command of general Reidesel, to agitate alarms in Connecticut and throughout the country of Vermont.

However, the truth was, Schuyler profited with great dexterity of these delays. Several regiments of regular troops from Peek's-Kill were already arrived at the camp, and although it was then the season of harvest, the militia of New England assembled from all quarters, and hastened to join the principal army. These re-enforcements placed it in a situation, if not to resume the offensive, at least to occupy all the tenable positions, and defend them with energy and effect.

In the meantime, general Burgoyne received intelligence that colonel St. Leger, whose detachment had been re-enforced by a considerable party of savages, after descending by the Lake Oneida from Oswego, into the country of the Mohawks, had arrived before and was closely besieging Fort Stanwix. He immediately conceived the hope of deriving an important advantage from this operation. For if the American army in his front proceeded up the Mohawk to the relief of Fort Stanwix, the English found the way open to Albany, and thus attained the first object of their desires. Moreover, if St. Leger succeeded, the Ame-

ricans would find themselves between two royal armies, that of St. Leger in front, and that of Burgoyne in rear. If, on the other hand, the republicans abandoned Fort Stanwix to its fate, and withdrew towards Albany, the country on the Mohawk would fall into the power of the English, and they might form a junction with colonel St. Leger. Their army thus re-enforced, and victualled by the Mohawks, would be in a situation to move forward. From these operations it must result, either that the enemy would resolve to stand an action, and, in this case, Burgoyne felt assured of victory; or, that he would gradually retire down the Hudson, and thus abandon to the English the city of Albany. If the propriety of a rapid movement forward was therefore evident, the difficulty of finding means to execute it was not less manifest, as the want of subsistence still continued; and this want would of necessity increase with the distance of the army from the lakes, through which it received its provisions. To maintain such a communication with Fort George during the whole time of so extensive a movement, as would secure the convoys from being intercepted by the enemy, was obviously impracticable. The army was too weak to afford a chain of posts for such an extent; and continual escorts for every separate supply, would be a still greater drain. Burgoyne therefore perceived distinctly that he must have recourse to some other source of supply, or totally relinquish the enterprise. He knew that the Americans had accumulated considerable stores of live cattle, corn and other necessaries, besides a large number of wheel carriages, at a village called Bennington, situated between two streams, which, afterwards

uniting, form the river Hosack. This place lies only twenty miles distant from the Hudson; it was the repository of all the supplies intended for the republican camp, which were expedited from New England by the upper part of Connecticut river, and thence through the country of Vermont. From Bennington they were conveyed, as occasion required, to the different parts of the army. The magazines were only guarded, however, by detachments of militia, whose numbers varied continually, as they went and came at discretion. Though the distance was considerable from the camp of Burgoyne to Bennington, yet as the whole country through which the corps of Reidesel had lately passed appeared peaceable, and even well inclined to submission, the English general, impelled by necessity, and allured by an ardent thirst of glory, did not despair of being able to surprise Bennington, and bring off the provisions of the enemy by means of his own carriages. Having taken this resolution, he entrusted the execution of it to lieutenant colonel Baum, a German officer of great bravery, and well versed in this sort of partisan war.

The force allotted to this service, amounted to about five hundred men, consisting of two hundred of Reidesel's dismounted dragoons, captain Frazer's marksmen, the Canada volunteers, a party of provincials who were perfectly acquainted with the country, and about a hundred Indians; the corps took with them two light pieces of artillery. At the same time lieutenant colonel Breyman, with his regiment of Brunswick grenadiers and light infantry, marched down towards Bennington, and took post at Battenkill, in order, if necessary, to support Baum. The



latter had received from general Burgoyne very suitable instructions; he was to exercise extreme caution in the choice of his posts; to have the country diligently explored by the Indians, on the part of Otter Creek, and towards Connecticut river; he was not to allow his regular troops to scatter, but to keep them always in a compact body; he was to march light troops in front and rear of his column, to guard against ambuscades; he was ordered not to hazard dubious rencounters, but if the enemy came upon him in superior force, to take a strong position and intrench himself; he was to give out that the whole army was upon the march for Connecticut; finally, he was to rejoin the army at Albany. Burgoyne, in order to facilitate this operation, and to hold the republican army in check, moved with all his troops down the left bank of the Hudson, and established his camp nearly opposite to Saratoga, having, at the same time, thrown a bridge of rafts over, by which the advanced corps were passed to that place.

These demonstrations tended to inspire the belief that all the British army was about to cross the river, in order to attack the enemy, who still continued to occupy his encampment at Stillwater.

According to the plan which had been traced for him, lieutenant colonel Baum set forward upon his march with equal celerity and caution. He very shortly fell in with a party of the enemy, who were escorting some cattle and provisions, both of which he took with little difficulty and sent back to the camp; but that evil fortune soon began to appear, which had already so fatally retarded the royal army. The want of horses and carriages and the roads now

become heavy and slippery, in consequence of the bad weather, rendered the advance of Baum excessively tedious. Hence the enemy, who stood upon their guard at Bennington, were seasonably informed of his approach. Colonel Stark, who had lately arrived with a corps of militia he had assembled in New Hampshire, commanded in that town. He sent with all speed to request colonel Warner, who, since the defeat of Hubbardston, had taken post at Manchester, to march to his assistance. All these troops, re-enforced with some of the neighbouring militia, amounted to about two thousand men. Upon the intelligence that the enemy approached, Stark detached colonel Gregg upon the look out; supposing at first it might be only a party of savages who were scouring the country. When he had discovered that they were regular troops, he fell back to his principal position at Bennington. Lieutenant colonel Baum, on his part, having learnt that the enemy were too strong to be attacked by his present force without temerity, sent immediately to Breyman, apprizing him of his situation, and pressing him to hasten to his succour. In the meantime he took an excellent post near Santcoick Mills, on the banks of Walloon-Creek, about four miles from Bennington, and there intrenched himself.

But Stark, not choosing to wait for the junction of the two parties, determined to attack him. Accordingly on the morning of the sixteenth of August, he issued from Bennington, and advanced with his troops divided in several corps, in order to surround the posts of Baum, and assault them on all sides at once. The latter, on seeing the Americans approach, persuaded himself that they were bodies of loyalists com-

ing up to join him. A number of refugees, who made part of his detachment, had prevailed upon an officer, more familiar with arms than with civil contentions, to adopt the absurd hopes and chimerical conceits with which they habitually deceived themselves. Having at length discovered his error, he defended himself with great valour. But such was the impetuosity, and even the superiority of the Americans, that he could not resist them long; having carried all before them, and taken his two pieces of cannon, they poured on every side into his intrenchments. The savages, Canadians and British marksmen, profiting of their activity, escaped in the woods. The German dragoons still kept together, and when their ammunition was expended, were bravely led by their commander to charge with their swords. But they were soon overwhelmed, and the survivors, among whom was their wounded colonel, were made prisoners.

In the mean time, Breyman had set forward from Batten-Kill to the succour of Baum; and although he was on the march by eight in the morning of the fifteenth, had continued it without intermission, and the distance was not over twenty-four miles; yet, so many and so formidable were the impediments he encountered, from the badness of the roads, rendered still more difficult by the continual rain, and from the weakness and tiring of horses in getting forward the artillery, that he was unable to reach the camp of Baum, till after fortune had already pronounced in favour of the Americans. It is asserted that he had received no timely information of the engagement, and that his first knowledge of it was brought him by the fugitives. It was four in the afternoon when he ap-

peared before the intrenchments of Baum, where, instead of meeting his friends, he found his detachment attacked on all sides by enemies. Though his men were excessively fatigued, they defended themselves with great spirit and resolution. As many of the provincial militia had disbanded to pillage, the action was maintained at first with an equality of advantage, and there was even danger that Breyman would recover what Baum had lost.

He had already dislodged the Americans from two or three different hills on which they had posts, and he pressed them so vigorously that they began to exhibit symptoms of disorder. But the affair soon assumed a quite different aspect; colonel Warner arrived at the head of his regiment of the line, and falling upon the rear of the English and Germans, restored the battle with increase of vehemence. The militia that were dispersed in quest of plunder, on hearing the report of the cannon, immediately rallied. Victory, however, remained doubtful till the dusk of evening: on one side combated valour and discipline, on the other, number and fury.

At length the soldiers of Breyman, overpowered by numbers, having expended all their ammunition, and lost the two pieces of artillery they had been at such pains to bring with them, began to give ground, and afterwards to break. They abandoned the field of battle, and in the precipitation of their retreat, left in the power of the conqueror all their baggage, a thousand muskets and nearly as many sabres. The obscurity of night covered their retreat. The royalists lost, in these two engagements, seven hundred men, the greater part prisoners; the number of killed was



probably about two hundred. The loss of the republicans was inconsiderable. The Congress addressed their public thanks to colonel Stark and the militia who took part in the actions of this day. Stark was moreover promoted to the rank of brigadier general.

In the country of the Mohawks the affairs of the English took, at first, the most favourable turn. Colonel St. Leger had encamped, the third of August, under Fort Stanwix. The force under his command consisting of English, Germans, Canadians and American loyalists, amounted to about eight hundred men. He was followed by a train of savages, with their wives and children, thirsting indeed for carnage and plunder, but feeble auxiliaries in besieging fortresses. Colonel Gansevort, on being summoned by the English, answered that he should defend himself to the last. Apprized of this state of things, and knowing the importance of this fort to the United States, general Harkimer, a leading man in the county of Tryon, assembled the militia and marched with all expedition to the relief of Gansevort. He sent an express from his camp of Erick, six miles from the fort, to inform him, that he was about to advance and make every exertion to effect his junction with the garrison. Gansevort directed lieutenant colonel Willet to make a sally upon the British lines, in order to favour the attempt of Harkimer; but the English commander perceiving how dangerous it was to receive the enemy in his intrenchments, and knowing full well how much better the Indians were adapted for the attack than for acting upon the defensive, detached colonel Johnson, with a part of the regular troops and the

Indians, to intercept the Americans upon their approach. General Harkimer advanced with extreme negligence, without examination of his ground, without a reconnoitring party in front, and without rangers upon his flanks: a thing the more surprising, as he could not have been ignorant how liable he was to ambuscades from the nature of the country, and the singular adroitness of the savages in that mode of war. These barbarians soon found occasion to give him a sanguinary proof of it. They concealed themselves with a detachment of regulars in the woods near the road by which the Americans approached. The moment the column had passed, they suddenly fell upon the rear-guard with inconceivable fury. After the first fire the Indians rushed on with their spears and hatchets, and killed with the same cruelty those who resisted and those who surrendered. The disorder became extreme; the carnage was frightful; and even the horrible aspect of the principal actors, contributed to heighten the terrors of the scene. The republicans, however, recovered from their first surprise, and forming themselves into a solid column, attained an advantageous ground, which enabled them to maintain a spirited resistance. They would nevertheless have been overborne by the number and fury of the enemy, if the intelligence of the attack upon his camp by colonel Willet had not induced him to retire. Four hundred Americans were slain, and among them general Harkimer. Many of the most distinguished men of the province, and several of the most considerable magistrates shared the same fate. The royalists looked upon this success as a sure pledge of the approaching reduction of the rebels.

Their victory, however, was not bought without blood: besides a certain number of regulars, about sixty Indians were killed and wounded, among whom were several of their principal chiefs, and of their most distinguished and favourite warriors. It appears also, that in the heat and confusion of the conflict, several savages were killed by the English themselves. Thus, these intractable and undisciplined barbarians, by nature ferocious, and inclined to suspicion, irritated at finding a resistance to which they had not been accustomed, became still more refractory and still more ruthless. They wreaked the first transports of their rage upon the unhappy prisoners, whom they inhumanly butchered in cold blood. Submission to European officers became insupportable to them, and they refused to obey. It was now perceived that their presence was more prejudicial, and even more dangerous, than useful to the British army.

Meanwhile, colonel Willet had conducted his sally with great spirit and ability. He entered the enemy's camp at the first onset, killed a great number of his men, and drove the rest into the woods or into the river. But his sole object being to make a diversion in favour of Harkimer, as soon as he had accomplished it, he returned into the fort, carrying with him in triumph the spoil and besieging utensils that he had taken from the enemy. The English were desirous of intercepting his retreat, and had prepared an ambuscade for the purpose; but his vigilance eluded the danger: he kept the assailants at a distance by a violent fire of musketry, and of artillery with grape shot. He led back his whole corps without loss, and raised a trophy composed of the conquered arms and bag-

gage under the American standard, which waved upon the walls of the fortress. He afterwards undertook, in company with another officer, named Stockwell, a much more perilous expedition. They passed by night through the English camp, and in contempt of the danger and cruelty of the savages, made their way for fifty miles through pathless woods and unexplored morasses, in order to raise the country and bring relief to the fort: an action so magnanimous it is impossible to commend too much.

Colonel St. Leger left no means untried to profit of his victory by intimidating the garrison. He sent verbal and written messages, stating their hopeless situation, the utter destruction of their friends, the impossibility of their obtaining relief, as general Burgoyne, after destroying every thing in his way, was now at Albany, receiving the submission of all the adjoining countries. After prodigiously magnifying his own force, as well as that of Burgoyne, he promised the Americans, that, in case of an immediate surrender, they should be treated according to the practice of civilized nations: at the same time he declared, that if, through an incorrigible obstinacy, they should continue a hopeless and fruitless defence, not only the soldiers would fall victims to the fury of the savages, but that, however against his will, every man, woman and child in the Mohawk country, would be massacred and scalped without mercy.

Colonel Gansevort replied with great firmness that he had been entrusted with the charge of that garrison by the United States of America; that he should defend the trust committed to his care at every hazard, and to the utmost extremity; and that he neither



thought himself accountable for, nor should he at all concern himself about any consequences that attended the discharge of his duty. He had very judiciously conjectured, that if the force of the British commander had been sufficient, he would have made a more simple summons, or would have attacked the fort immediately, without wasting his time in drawing up so extraordinary a bravado. The British commander, finding that neither ambushes nor threats could effect his purpose, turned all his thoughts upon a regular siege. But he was not long in perceiving that the fort was stronger, and much better defended, than it had been reported. He also found by experience, that his artillery was not sufficient in weight to make much impression at a certain distance. The only remedy was, to bring his approaches so near that they must take effect; which he set about with the greatest diligence. But the savages, from the dissatisfaction they felt at their late losses, and from the disappointment of their hopes of plunder, became every day more sullen and ungovernable. The English commander was in continual apprehension that they would pillage his camp, and abandon the British standard. In this disagreeable situation, he was informed that general Arnold was rapidly approaching, at the head of a strong detachment, to relieve the fort. It appears that general Schuyler, upon intelligence that the fort which had taken his name was besieged, had despatched Arnold to its succour, with a brigade of regular troops commanded by general Larned, which was afterwards re-enforced by a thousand light infantry detached by general Gates. Arnold had advanced with his usual celerity up the

Mohawk river, but before he had got half way, having learnt that Gansevort was hard pushed by the enemy, and knowing all the importance of expedition, he quitted the main body, and with a light armed detachment of only nine hundred men, set forward by forced marches towards the fortress. The Indians, who were incessantly upon the look-out, were soon informed of his approach, either by their own scouts, or by the spies that were despatched by Arnold himself, who prodigiously exaggerated his strength. At the name of Arnold, and in their present temper, they were seized with terror and dismay. Other scouts arrived immediately after with a report, which probably grew out of the affair of Bennington, that Burgoyne's army was entirely cut to pieces. They would now stay no longer, and assembled tumultuously, intending to abandon the camp. Colonel St. Leger endeavoured to dissipate their terrors and detain them, by promising to lead them himself, to bring all his best troops into action, and by carrying their leaders out to mark a field of battle, and the flattery of consulting them upon the intended plan of operation. Finally, the British commander called a council of their chiefs, hoping, that by the influence which colonel Johnson, and the superintendants Claus and Butler had over them, they might still be induced to make a stand. He was disappointed. A part of the savages decamped whilst the council was sitting, and the remainder threatened peremptorily to abandon him if he did not immediately retreat. The English were forced to comply with their demands. They raised the siege the twenty-second of August, and retreated, or rather

fled, towards Lake Oneida. Their tents, artillery, and stores, fell into the hands of the enemy; who, issuing from the fort, assailed their rear-guard, and treated it very roughly. But the British troops were exposed to greater danger from the fury of their savage allies, than even from the pursuit of the republicans. During the retreat, they robbed the officers of their baggage, and the army in general of their provisions. Not content with this, they first stripped of their arms, and afterwards murdered with their own bayonets, all those who from an inability to keep up, fear, or any other cause, were separated from the main body. It would be in vain to attempt a description of the confusion, the terror, and all the miseries which attended this discomfiture of the royal troops. They arrived, however, at length, upon the lake, where they found some repose. St. Leger returned to Montreal, and afterwards passed to Ticonderoga, on his way to join Burgoyne. Arnold arrived at the fort in the evening of the twenty-fourth, two days after the siege had been raised: he and his soldiers were welcomed by the garrison with the acknowledgement of deliverance, and the exultation of victory.

By the affairs of Bennington and this of Fort Schuyler, it appeared that fortune began to smile upon the cause of the Americans. These successes produced the more happy effect upon their minds, the more they were unexpected; for since the fatal stroke which deprived them of Montgomery, they had found this war of Canada but one continued series of disasters. Their late discouragement and timidity, were instantly converted into confidence and ardour. The English, on the contrary, could not witness

without apprehension the extinction of those brilliant hopes, which, from their first advantages, they had been led to entertain.

Thus the face of things had experienced a total change; and this army, of late the object of so much terror for the Americans, was now looked upon as a prey which could not escape them. The exploit of Bennington, in particular, had inspired the militia with great confidence in themselves; since they had not only combated, but repulsed and vanquished, the regular troops of the royal army, both English and German.

They began now to forget all distinctions between themselves and troops of the line, and the latter made new exertions and more strenuous efforts to maintain their established reputation for superiority over the militia. Having lost all hope of seizing the magazines at Bennington, general Burgoyne experienced anew the most alarming scarcity of provisions. But on the other hand, the successes of the Americans under the walls of Fort Schuyler, besides having inspirited the militia, produced also this other happy effect, that of enabling them, now liberated from the fear of invasion in the country upon the Mohawk, to unite all their forces on the banks of the Hudson against the army of Burgoyne. The country people took arms in multitudes, and hastened to the camp. The moment was favourable; the harvests were ended, and the arrival of general Gates to take the command of the army, gave a new spur to their alacrity. This officer enjoyed the entire esteem and confidence of the Americans; his name alone was considered among them as the presage of success. The Con-



gress, in their sitting of the fourth of August, had appointed him to the command of the army of the north, while affairs still wore the most lowering aspect; but he had not arrived at Stillwater till the twenty-first.

General Schuyler was promptly apprized that a successor had been given him; but this good citizen had continued until the arrival of Gates to exert all his energies to repair the evil. Already, as we have seen, his efforts had not been fruitless, and victory inclined in his favour. He bitterly complained to Washington, that the course of his fortune was interrupted, and that the fruit of his toils was given to another, who was about to enjoy that victory for which he had prepared the way. But the Congress preferred to place at the head of an army, dismayed by its reverses, a general celebrated for his achievements. Moreover they were not ignorant that if Schuyler was agreeable to the New Yorkers, he was nevertheless in great disrepute with the people of Massachusetts, and the other provinces of New England.

This necessarily counteracted that alacrity with which it was desired that the militia from that quarter should hasten to re-enforce the army of the north, which was then encamped in the islands situated at the confluence of the Mohawk with the Hudson.

Another and very powerful cause contributed to excite the mass of the Americans to rise against the English army, which was the cruelties committed by the savages under St. Leger and Burgoyne, who spared neither age nor sex nor opinions. The friends of the royal cause, as well as its enemies, were equally

victims to their indiscriminate rage. The people abhorred and execrated an army which consented to act with such ferocious auxiliaries. Though too true, their deeds of barbarity were aggravated by the writers and orators of the patriot party, which carried the exasperation of minds to its utmost height. They related, among others, an event, which drew tears from every eye, and might furnish, if not too horrible, an affecting subject for the dramatic art.

A young lady by the name of M'Crea, as distinguished for her virtues as for the beauty of her person and the gentleness of her manners, of respectable family, and recently affianced to a British officer, was seized by the savages in her father's house, near Fort Edward, dragged into the woods, with several other young people of both sexes, and there barbarously scalped and afterwards murdered. Thus, this ill-fated damsel, instead of being conducted to the hymeneal altar, received an inhuman death at the very hands of the companions in arms of that husband she was about to espouse. The recital of an atrocity so unexampled, struck every breast with horror, as well in Europe as in America, and the authors of the Indian war were loaded with the bitterest maledictions.

The Americans represent the fact as it is stated above; other writers relate it differently. According to their account, Young Jones, the British officer, fearing that some ill might betide the object of his love, as well in consequence of the obstinate attachment of her father to the royal cause, as because their mutual passion was already publicly talked of, had, by the promise of a large recompense, induced two Indians, of different tribes, to take her under their es-

cort, and conduct her in safety to the camp. The two savages went accordingly, and brought her through the woods; but at the very moment they were about to place her in the hands of her future husband, they fell to quarrelling about their recompense, each contending that it belonged entirely to himself, when one of them, transported with brutal fury, raised his club and laid the unhappy maiden dead at his feet. General Burgoyne, on being informed of this horrid act, ordered the assassin to be arrested, that he might suffer the punishment due to his crime. But he soon after pardoned him upon the promise made him by the savages of abstaining for the future from similar barbarities, and of strictly observing the conditions to which they had pledged themselves upon the banks of the river Bouquet. The general believed that this act of clemency would be more advantageous than the example of chastisement. It even appears that he did not think himself sufficiently authorized, by the laws of England, to try and punish with death the murderer of the young lady; as if there existed not other laws besides the English, which bound him to inflict a just chastisement upon the perpetrator of a crime so execrable. But if he was warned by prudence to abstain from it, then was he to be pitied for the state of weakness to which he was reduced, and the weight of censure and detestation must fall exclusively upon the counsels of those who had called these barbarians into a civil contest. However, the truth was, the condescendence of general Burgoyne recoiled upon himself; for the savages finding they were no longer permitted, as at first, to satiate their passion for pillage

and massacre, deserted the camp and returned to their several homes, ravaging and plundering whatever they found in their way. Thus terminated, almost entirely, this year, the Indian war; a war impolitic in principle, atrocious in execution, and bootless in result. The Canadians themselves, and the loyalists who followed the royal army, terrified at the sinister aspect of affairs, deserted with one consent: so that Burgoyne, in his greatest need, was left nearly destitute of other force except his English and German regular troops.

Such was his situation when a party of republicans undertook an enterprise upon the rear of his army, which, if it had succeeded, would have entirely cut off his provisions and retreat towards Canada; and at least demonstrated the danger to which he had exposed himself in having advanced with so small an army to so great a distance from the strong posts upon the lakes.

General Lincoln, with a strong corps of the militia of New Hampshire and Connecticut, conceived the hope of recovering for the confederation the fortresses of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, and consequently the command of Lake George. He knew that these places were guarded only by feeble garrisons. He advanced from Manchester to Pawlet. He parted his corps into three divisions: the first, commanded by colonel Brown, was to proceed to the northern extremity of Lake George, and thence to fall by surprise upon Ticonderoga; the second, led by colonel Johnston, was destined to scour the country about Fort Independence, in order to make a diversion, and even an attack, if occasion should favour



it; the third, under the orders of colonel Woodbury, had it in view to reduce Skeenesborough, Fort Anne, and even Fort Edward. Colonel Brown, with equal secrecy and celerity, surprised all the posts upon Lake George and the inlet of Ticonderoga, Mount Hope, Mount Defiance, and the old French lines. He took possession of two hundred batteaux, an armed brig, and several gun-boats: he also made a very considerable number of prisoners. Colonel Johnston arrived at the same time under the walls of Fort Independence. The two fortresses were summoned to capitulate. But brigadier Powell, who held the chief command, replied, that he was resolved to defend himself. The Americans continued their cannonade for the space of four days; but their artillery being of small caliber, and the English opposing a spirited resistance, they were constrained to abandon the enterprise, and to recover their former positions.

Meanwhile, general Burgoyne continued in his camp on the left bank of the Hudson, where he used the most unremitting industry and perseverance in bringing stores and provisions forward from Fort George. Having at length by strenuous efforts obtained about thirty days' provision, he took a resolution of passing the river with his army, in order to engage the enemy, and force a passage to Albany. As a swell of the water, occasioned by great rains, had carried away his bridge of rafts, he threw another, of boats, over the river at the same place. Towards the middle of September, he crossed with his army to the right bank of the Hudson, and encamped on the heights and in the plain of Saratoga, Gates being then in the neighbourhood of Stillwater, about

three miles below. The two armies of course faced each other, and a battle was expected soon to follow.

This measure of passing the Hudson was by many censured with great vehemence: it was considered as the principal cause of the unfortunate issue of this campaign. Some were of the opinion that after the affairs of Bennington and Stanwix, Burgoyne would have acted more wisely, considering the daily increase of the American army, if he had renounced the project of occupying Albany, and made the best of his way back to the lakes. It appears, however, to us but just to remark for his excuse, that at this time he had not yet received any intelligence either of the strength of the army left at New York, or of the movements which Sir Henry Clinton was to make, or had made, up the North river towards Albany. He calculated upon a powerful co-operation on the part of that general. Such was the plan of the ministers, and such the tenor of his own peremptory instructions. And to what reproaches would he not have exposed himself, if, by retiring towards Ticonderoga, he had abandoned Clinton to himself, and thus voluntarily relinquished all the advantages that were expected from the junction of the two armies? We may, however, consider as vain the apology which was advanced by Burgoyne himself, when he alleged that if he had returned to the lakes, Gates might have gone to join Washington, who, falling upon Howe with the combined armies, must have overpowered him, and decided the fate of the whole war. Gates would never have abandoned the shores of the Hudson, so long as the army of Burgoyne was opposed to him, whether in the position of

Saratoga, or in that of Ticonderoga. It is, besides, to be observed, that as a great part of the army of Gates consisted in the New England militia, these, at least, would not have followed him, even if he had marched upon the Delaware. But, though we think that Burgoyne committed no error in resolving to prosecute his expedition, it nevertheless appears that he ought not to have passed the Hudson. By continuing upon the left bank, he could retire at will towards Ticonderoga, or push forward towards Albany. It was evidently more easy to execute this movement, while having between himself and the now formidable army of Gates, so broad a river as the Hudson. The roads above, from Batten-Kill to Fort George, were much easier upon the left than those upon the right bank; and in going down towards Albany, if they were not better, at least they were not worse. The city of Albany, it is true, is situated upon the right bank; but when Burgoyne should have arrived opposite to that city, upon the left, the English from below might have come up with their boats, and transported the troops to the right bank. At any rate, Burgoyne might thus have operated his junction with Clinton. But the former, either confiding too much in his army, which was, in truth, equally brave and flourishing, or not esteeming the Americans enough, notwithstanding the more favourable opinion of them which the actions of Bennington and of Stanwix should have given him, resolved to quit the safer ground and try the fortune of a battle: he considered victory as certain and decisive. In like manner as the British ministers, erroneously estimating the constancy of the colonists, had persuaded

themselves that they could reduce them to submission by rigorous laws, the generals deceiving themselves as strangely with respect to their courage, had no doubt that with their presence, a few threats, and a little rattling of their arms, they could put them to flight. From this blind confidence in victory, resulted a series of defeats, and the war was irretrievably lost from too sanguine an assurance of triumph.

But let us resume the course of events. The nineteenth of September was reserved by destiny for an obstinate and sanguinary action, in which it was at length to be decided whether the Americans, as some pretended, could only resist the English when protected by the strength of works, or of woods, rivers and mountains, or if they were capable of meeting them upon equal ground, in fair and regular battle. General Burgoyne having surmounted the obstacles of thick woods and broken bridges, by which his progress was continually interrupted, at length arrived in the front of the enemy, some woods only of no great extent separating the two armies. Without a moment's delay, the English formed themselves in order of battle: their right wing rested upon some high grounds, which rise gradually from the river; it was flanked by the grenadiers and light infantry, who occupied the hills. At some distance in front, and upon the side of these, were posted those Indians, Canadians and loyalists, who had still remained in the camp. The left wing and artillery, under general Phillips and Reidesel, kept along the great road and meadows by the river side. The American army drew up in the same order from the Hudson to the hills: Gates had taken the right, and given the



left to Arnold. Smart skirmishes immediately ensued between the foremost marksmen of either army. Morgan, with his light horse, and colonel Durbin with the light infantry, had attacked and routed the Canadians and savages; but the latter having been supported, they were both in their turn compelled to resume their place in the line. Meanwhile, Burgoyne, either intending to turn the left flank of the enemy, or wishing to avoid, by passing higher up, the hollows of the torrents which fall into the Hudson, extended his right wing upon the heights, in order to fall upon Arnold in flank and rear.

But Arnold was, at the same time, endeavouring to execute a similar manœuvre upon him, while neither of them was able, on account of the woods, to perceive the movements of his enemy.

The two parties met; general Frazer repulsed the Americans. Finding the right flank of the enemy's right wing so well defended, they left a sufficient guard to defend this passage, made a rapid movement to their right, and vigorously assailed the left flank of the same wing. Arnold exhibited upon this occasion all the impetuosity of his courage; he encouraged his men with voice and example. The action became extremely warm; the enemy fearing that Arnold, by cutting their line, would penetrate between their wings, as was manifestly his intention, hastened to re-enforce the points attacked. General Frazer came up with the twenty-fourth regiment, some light infantry and Breyman's riflemen; he would have drawn more troops from the right flank, but the heights on which it was posted, were of too great importance to be totally evacuated. Meanwhile, such was the valour and

impetuosity of the Americans, that the English began to fall into confusion; but general Phillips soon appeared with fresh men and a part of the artillery: upon hearing the firing he had rapidly made his way through a very difficult wood to the scene of danger. He restored the action at the very moment it was about being decided in favour of the enemy.

The Americans, however, renewed their attacks with such persevering energy that night only parted the combatants. The royalists passed it under arms upon the field of battle; the republicans retired. They had lost from three to four hundred men in killed and wounded; among the former were colonels Adams and Coburn. The English had to regret more than five hundred, and among others, captain Jones, of the artillery, an officer of great merit.

Both parties claimed the honour of victory. The English, it is true, kept possession of the field of battle; yet, as the intention of the Americans was not to advance, but to maintain their position, and that of the English not to maintain theirs, but to gain ground, and as besides it was a victory for the republicans not to be vanquished, it is easy to see which had the advantage of the day. On the other hand, the English were now convinced, to the great prejudice of their hopes, and even of their courage, that they would have to grapple with a foe as eager for action, as careless of danger, and as indifferent with respect to ground or cover as themselves.

The day following, general Burgoyne finding that he must abandon all idea of dislodging the enemy by force, from his intrenched positions, endeavoured to console himself with the hope, that time might offer him some occasion, to operate with more effect.

He was, besides, in daily expectation of news from general Clinton, with respect to whose movements he was still entirely in the dark. Resolving, therefore, to pause, he pitched his camp within cannon-shot of the American lines. He threw up numerous intrenchments, both upon his right, the part which had been attacked, and upon his left, in order to defend the meadows near the river, where he had established his magazines and hospitals. An English regiment, the Hessians of Hanau, and a detachment of loyalists were encamped in the same meadows for greater security. General Gates continued to occupy his first position, taking care, however, to fortify himself strongly on the left. With the return of success, his army was continually re-enforced by the accession of fresh bodies of the militia. General Lincoln joined him with two thousand men, well trained and disciplined, from the New England provinces. The English exerted the greatest vigilance to avoid surprise; and the Americans to prevent them from going out of their camp to forage. The skirmishes were animated and frequent.

The British general had for a long time been expecting news from New York; and his impatience was at its height, when, the twentieth of September, he received a letter of the tenth, written in cyphers, by general Clinton, informing him that about the twentieth of the month, he should with two thousand men attack Fort Montgomery, situated on the right bank of the Hudson, and upon the declivity of the highlands. He excused himself upon account of weakness for not doing more; and even declared, that if the enemy made any movement towards the coasts of

New York, he should be forced to return thither. Burgoyne immediately despatched an emissary, two officers in disguise, and some other trusty persons, by different routes, to general Clinton, with a full account of his present situation, urging him to a speedy execution of the diversion he had proposed, and informing him that he was provided with sufficient necessaries, to hold out in his present position till the twelfth of October. Although the assistance promised by Clinton was much less effectual than Burgoyne had kept in view, nevertheless, he still cherished a hope that the attack on Fort Montgomery, and the apprehension that the English after its reduction might make their way up the river, would induce Gates either to change the position of his camp, or to send large detachments down the river, to oppose the progress of Clinton, and that in either case, some occasion would be offered him to gain a decisive advantage, and open his passage to Albany. But, whoever considers the great superiority, in spirit as well as number, of the army of Gates over that of Burgoyne, and that the former was continually increasing in force, will readily perceive how vain were the expectations of the British general. It appears, therefore, that the mere survey of his own weakness, of that of Clinton, and of the preponderant force of Gates, should have determined him for retreat, if, however, retreat was still in his power. For to cross the river in sight of so formidable an army, would have been too perilous an enterprise; and here it is again perceived how imprudent had been the measure of passing it at first, since from that moment it became alike impossible to advance or to recede.



In the beginning of October, general Burgoyne thought it expedient, from the difficulty of his situation and the uncertainty of succour, to lessen the soldiers' rations of provisions; to this measure, from its necessity, they submitted with great cheerfulness. But the twelfth of October was approaching, the term limited for the stay of the army in its present encampment. The seventh was already arrived, and no tidings came of the operations that had been proposed for its relief. In this alarming state of things, the English general resolved to make a movement to the enemy's left, not only to discover whether there were any possible means of forcing a passage, should it be necessary to advance, or of dislodging them for the convenience of retreat, but also to cover a forage of the army. He was impelled by necessity to attempt a decisive stroke. Accordingly he put himself at the head of a detachment of fifteen hundred regular troops, with two twelve pounders, two howitzers, and six six pounders. He was seconded by generals Phillips, Reidesel and Frazer, all officers distinguished for their zeal and ability. The guard of the camp upon the high grounds was committed to the brigadiers general Hamilton and Speight, that of the redoubts and plain near the river, to brigadier Goll.

The force of the enemy immediately in the front of his lines was so much superior, that Burgoyne could not venture to augment his detachment beyond the number we have stated. He had given orders that during this first attack, several companies of loyalists and Indians should be pushed on through by-ways, to appear as a check upon the rear of the enemy's left flank. The column of regulars having already

issued from the camp, were formed within three quarters of a mile of the enemy's left, and manifested an intention to turn it. But general Gates, who observed this movement, instantly penetrated the design of the English, and with exquisite discernment resolved to make a sudden and rapid attack upon the left of this corps, hoping thus to separate it from the remainder of the army, and to cut off its retreat to the camp. The Americans advanced to the charge with incredible impetuosity, but they were received with equal resolution by major Ackland, at the head of the grenadiers. Gates immediately detached a fresh and powerful re-enforcement to the aid of the first, and the attack was soon extended along the whole front of the Germans, who were posted immediately on the right of Ackland's grenadiers. Hence the British general found it impracticable to move any part of that body, as he would have desired, for the purpose of forming a second line to support this left flank, where the great weight of the fire still fell. As yet the right was unengaged, when the British generals perceived that the enemy were marching a strong body round their flank, in order to cut off their retreat. To oppose this dangerous design of the American general, the light infantry, with a part of the twenty-fourth regiment, which were joined with them at that post, were thrown into a second line, in order to cover the retreat of the troops into camp. Whilst this movement was yet in process, Arnold came up with three regiments and fell upon this right wing. Gates, at the same time, sent a strong re-enforcement to decide the action on the English left, which being at length totally overpowered, fell into disorder and

fled. The light infantry and the twenty-fourth advanced with all speed to check the victorious Americans, whose riflemen pursued the fugitives with great eagerness; there ensued an extremely warm affair, and many perished on both sides.

Upon this occasion, brigadier general Frazer was mortally wounded, an officer whose loss was severely felt by the English, and whose valour and abilities justified their regrets. Their situation now became exceedingly critical: even their camp was threatened; the enemy, emboldened by victory, was advancing to storm it, and if he arrived before the retreating detachment, there could be little hope of defending it. Phillips and Reidesel were ordered to rally with all expedition those troops which were nearest, or most disengaged, to cover the retreat of the others, while Burgoyne himself, fiercely pursued by Arnold, retired with great precipitation towards the camp. The detachment at length, though with extreme difficulty, regained the intrenchments, having left, however, upon the field of battle a great number of killed and wounded, particularly of the artillery corps, who had, with equal glory to themselves and prejudice to the enemy, displayed the utmost ability in their profession, along with the most undaunted resolution. Six pieces of cannon also remained in the power of the Americans.

But the business of the day was not yet terminated. The English had scarcely entered the camp, when the Americans, pursuing their success, assaulted it in different parts with uncommon fierceness; rushing to the lines through a severe fire of grape-shot and small arms, with the utmost fury. Arnold especially, who

in this day appeared intoxicated with the thirst of battle and carnage, led on the attack against a part of the intrenchments occupied by the light infantry, under Lord Balcarres: But the English received him with great vigour and spirit. The action was obstinate and sanguinary. At length, as it grew towards evening, Arnold having forced all obstacles, entered the works with some of the most fearless of his followers. But in this critical moment of glory and danger, he was grievously wounded in the same leg which had been already shattered at the assault of Quebec. To his great regret, he was constrained to retire. His party still continued the attack, and the English sustained it with obstinacy, till night separated the combatants.

The royalists were not so fortunate in another quarter. A republican detachment, commanded by lieutenant colonel Brooks, having succeeded by a circuitous movement in turning the right wing of the English, fell, sword in hand, upon the right flank of their intrenchments, and made the most desperate efforts to carry them. This post was defended by lieutenant colonel Breyman, at the head of the German reserve. The resistance at first was exceedingly vigorous; but Breyman being mortally wounded, his countrymen were damped, and at length routed, with great slaughter. Their tents, artillery, and baggage, fell into the power of the assailants. The Americans established themselves in the intrenchments. General Burgoyne, upon hearing of this disaster, ordered them to be dislodged immediately. But either in consequence of the approach of night, or from the discouragement of his troops, he was not obeyed, and



the victors continued to occupy the positions they had gained with so much glory. They had now acquired an opening on the right and rear of the British army. The other American divisions passed the night under arms, at the distance of half a mile from the British camp. The loss in dead and wounded was great on both sides; but especially on the part of the English, of whom no few were also made prisoners. Majors Williams of the artillery, and Ackland of the grenadiers, were among the latter. Many pieces of artillery, all the baggage of the Germans, and many warlike stores, fell into the power of the republicans, who needed them greatly. They were impatient for the return of day, to renew the battle. But deplorable, and perilous beyond expression, was the situation of the British troops; they bore it, however, with admirable temper and firmness. It was evidently impossible to continue in their present position, without submitting to a certainty of destruction on the ensuing day. The Americans, invigorated and encouraged, would certainly have profited of the access they had already opened to themselves on the right, and of other untenable points, to carry every part of the camp, and completely surround the British army. Burgoyne therefore determined to operate a total change of ground. He executed this movement with admirable order and without any loss. The artillery, the camp and its appertenances, were all removed before morning to the heights above the hospital. The British army in this position had the river in its rear, and its two wings displayed along the hills upon the right bank. The English expected to be attacked the following day. But Gates, like the

experienced general he was, would not expose to the risk of another battle that victory of which he was already certain. He intended that time, famine and necessity, should complete the work which his arms had so fortunately commenced. There were frequent skirmishes, however, engaged in the course of the day; but of little importance. Towards night, the obsequies of general Frazer were celebrated in the British camp; a ceremony mournful of itself, and rendered even terrible by the sense of recent losses, of future dangers, and of regret for the deceased. The darkness and silence of night aided the effect of the blaze and roar of the American artillery; while at every moment the balls spattered earth upon the face of the officiating chaplain.

General Gates, prior to the battle, had detached a strong division of his army to take post upon the left bank of the Hudson, opposite to Saratoga, in order to guard the passage and prevent the enemy's escape on that side. He now despatched a second detachment to occupy a passage higher up. He ordered at the same time a selected corps of two thousand men to push forward and turn the right flank of the enemy, so as to enclose him on every side. Burgoyne, on intelligence of this motion, determined to retire towards Saratoga, situated six miles up the river, on the same bank. The army accordingly began to move at nine o'clock at night; but such was the badness of the roads, rendered still more difficult by a heavy rain which fell that night, and such was the weakness of the teams for want of forage, that the English did not reach Saratoga till the evening of the ensuing day; the soldiers were harassed with fatigue

and hunger. The hospital, with three hundred sick and wounded, and a great number of wheel carriages, were abandoned to the enemy. The English, as they retired, burnt the houses, and destroyed whatever they could use no longer.

The rain having ceased, Gates followed them step by step, and with extreme caution, as they had broken all the bridges, and he was resolved not to give them any opportunity to engage him with advantage.

Fearing that Burgoyne would hasten to detach his light troops, in order to secure the passage of the river near Fort Edward, he rapidly threw several companies of militia into that fort, in order to prevent it. Scarcely had they arrived there, when the English rangers appeared: but finding themselves anticipated, they returned disappointed and dejected. During this time, the main body of the English army having passed the night of the ninth at Saratoga, left it on the morning of the tenth, and forded Fish-Kill Creek, which falls into the Hudson a little to the northward of that town. The British generals had hoped that they should here be able to cross the river at the principal ford, and escape pursuit upon its left bank. But they found a body of republicans already arrived, and throwing up intrenchments on the heights to the left of Fish-Kill Creek. These Americans, however, when they observed the great superiority of the English, retired over the Hudson, and there joined a greater force, which was stationed to prevent the passage of the army. Having lost all hope of passing the river in the vicinity of Saratoga, the British generals had it in mind to push forward

upon the right bank, till they arrived in front of Fort Edward, and then to force a passage to the left bank, in defiance of the troops stationed there for its defence. For this purpose a company of artificers, under the escort of a regiment of the line, with a detachment of marksmen and loyalists, was sent forward to repair the bridges, and open the road to Fort Edward. But they were not long departed from the camp, when the enemy appeared in great force upon the heights on the opposite side of Fish-Kill Creek, and seemed preparing to cross it, in order to bring on an immediate engagement.

The regulars and marksmen were immediately recalled. The workmen had only commenced the repair of the first bridge, when they were abandoned by the loyalists, who ran away, and left them to shift for themselves, only upon a very slight attack of an inconsiderable party of the enemy. Hence it became necessary to abandon all hopes of saving the artillery and baggage.

Amidst all these embarrassments, still a new difficulty presented itself; the republicans who lined the further shore of the Hudson, kept up a continual fire upon the batteaux loaded with provisions and necessities which had attended the motions of the army up the river, since its departure from Stillwater. Many of these boats had been taken, some retaken, and a number of men lost on both sides. At length, to avoid these inconveniences, the English were forced to land the provisions and transport them up the hill to the camp; a labour which they accomplished under a heavy fire with great fatigue and loss. Nothing could now exceed the distress and cala-



mity of the British army; the soldiers as well as the generals were reduced to brood upon the prospect of an ignominious surrender, or total destruction. To attempt the passage of so wide a river, while its shore was guarded with so much vigilance by a formidable body of troops, and in the presence of a powerful enemy, flushed with victory, was an enterprise savouring rather of madness than temerity. On the other hand, the retreat upon the right bank, with the same enemy at the rear, through ways so difficult and impracticable, was a scheme which presented obstacles absolutely insurmountable. Every thing announced therefore an inevitable catastrophe. Nevertheless, in the midst of so much calamity, a ray of hope suddenly gleamed upon the English; and they were near gaining an opportunity of retrieving their affairs all at once. The two armies were only separated by the Fish-Kill Creek; report, which magnifies all things, had represented to general Gates the feeble detachment which Burgoyne had sent to escort his pioneers upon the route to Fort Edward, as the entire vanguard and centre of the British army, already well on their way towards that fort. He concluded, therefore, that only the rear-guard remained near the Fish-Kill, and instantly conceived the hope of crushing it by an attack with all his forces. He made all his preparations in the morning of the eleventh of October. His scheme was, to take advantage of a thick fog, which in those regions, and at this season, usually obscures the atmosphere till a little after sun-rise, to pass the Fish-Kill very early, to seize a battery which Burgoyne had erected upon the opposite bank, and then to fall immediately upon the enemy. The

English general had notice of this plan: he furnished the battery with a strong guard, and posted his troops in ambush behind the thickets which covered the banks of the creek. In this position he waited the enemy's approach, and calculating upon their supposed error, he had little doubt of victory. The brigade of the American general Nixon had already forded the Fish-Kill, and that of general Glover was about to follow it. But just as the latter entered the water, he was informed by a British deserter, that not only the rear-guard, but the whole royal army, was drawn up in order of battle upon the other bank. Upon this intelligence Glover halted, and sent to apprise Nixon of the danger he was in of being cut in pieces, unless he hastened to recover the left bank. General Gates was immediately informed of the incident: he revoked all the orders he had given, and directed that the troops should be re-conducted to their positions. General Nixon received the message of Glover in good time; for a quarter of an hour later he would have been lost irrecoverably. He fell back with all expedition; but the fog being dissipated before he was out of sight of the enemy, his rear-guard was annoyed by the English artillery, with the loss of a few soldiers.

Frustrated of this hope, general Burgoyne applied his thoughts to devise, if possible, some other way to save the army. He called a council of war, in which it was resolved to attempt by a rapid retreat in the night up the Hudson, to gain the fords of that river at or above Fort Edward, and there having forced a passage, to press on to Fort George. That nothing might retard the march, it was determined to aban-

don the artillery, baggage, carriages, and all incumbrances. The soldiers were to carry upon their backs a sufficient quantity of provisions to support them till they could arrive at Fort George. All the troops prepared to execute the plan of their general.

But Gates had already, with great foresight, taken all his measures to defeat it. He had recommended the utmost vigilance to the parties that were stationed to guard the opposite shore of the river: he had posted a strong detachment to guard the fords near Fort Edward, with orders to oppose any attempt of the enemy to pass them, till he should arrive with the army upon his rear. In addition to this, he had established a camp in force, and provided with artillery, upon the high and strong grounds between Fort Edward and Fort George. General Burgoyne had sent forward scouts, to examine the route, and especially to ascertain whether it was possible to force the passage opposite to Fort Edward. They returned with an account that the roads were inconceivably rough and difficult; that the enemy were so numerous and vigilant upon the left bank, that no movement of the army upon the right could escape immediate discovery; and that the passages at the fort were so diligently defended, that it was absolutely impossible to force them without artillery. They also mentioned the intrenched camp on the hills between the two forts. Burgoyne had no sooner received this afflict-  
• ing intelligence, than he was also informed that general Gates, with the main body of his army, was so near, and observed him with such steady attention, that it would be impossible for him to move a step without being instantly followed: he then saw that he

must relinquish all hope of saving himself by his own efforts.

In this deplorable extremity, his only refuge from despair was the faint hope of co-operation from the parts down the river; and with the most intense desire he looked for the aid of Clinton.

It exceeds the power of words to describe the pitiable condition to which the British army was now reduced. The troops, worn down by a series of hard toil, incessant effort and stubborn action; abandoned by the Indians and Canadians; the whole army reduced by repeated and heavy losses of many of their best men and most distinguished officers from ten thousand combatants to less than five thousand effective fighting men, of whom little more than three thousand were English. In these circumstances, and in this state of weakness, without a possibility of retreat, they were invested by an army of four times their own number, whose position extended three parts in four of a circle round them; who refused to fight from a knowledge of their condition: and who from the nature of the ground, could not be attacked in any part. In this helpless situation, obliged to lie constantly on their arms, whilst a continued cannonade pervaded all the camp, and even rifle and grape shot fell in every part of their lines, the troops of Burgoyne retained their ordinary constancy, and while sinking under a hard necessity, they showed themselves worthy of a better fate. Nor could they be reproached with any action or word which betrayed a want of temper, or of fortitude.

At length, no succour appearing, and no rational ground of hope of any kind remaining, an exact ac-



count of the provisions was taken on the morning of the thirteenth, when it was found that the whole stock would afford no more than three days bare subsistence for the army. In such a state, it was alike impossible to advance or to remain as they were; and the longer they delayed to take a definitive resolution, the more desperate became their situation. Burgoyne, therefore, immediately called a council of war, at which not only the generals and field officers but all the captains of companies were invited to assist. While they deliberated the bullets of the Americans whistled around them, and frequently pierced even the tent where the council was convened. It was determined unanimously to open a treaty and enter into a convention with the American general.

Gates used his victory with moderation. Only he proposed that the royal troops should lay down their arms in camp; a condition which appeared too hard to the English, and which they peremptorily refused. They all preferred to be led against the enemy, notwithstanding the disadvantage of number, rather than submit to such a disgrace. After several conferences the articles of capitulation were settled the fifteenth. They were to be signed by the two contracting parties on the morning of the seventeenth. In the night, captain Campbell arrived at the British camp, sent express by general Clinton, with the intelligence that he had moved up the Hudson, reduced Fort Montgomery, and penetrated as far as *Æsopus*. The hope of safety revived in the breasts of some.

The officers were invited to declare, whether in a case of extremity, the soldiers were in a situation to fight, and whether they considered the public faith

as pledged by the verbal convention. A great number answered, that the soldiers debilitated by fatigue and hunger, were unable to make resistance; all were decidedly of the opinion, that the public faith was engaged. Burgoyne alone manifested a contrary opinion. But he was constrained to acquiesce in the general suffrage. Meanwhile, Gates, apprized of these hesitations of his enemy, and the new hopes which occasioned them, formed his troops in order of battle on the morning of the seventeenth, and sent to inform Burgoyne that the stipulated time being arrived, he must either sign the articles, or prepare himself for battle.

The Englishman had taken his resolution: he signed the paper, which had this superscription: *Convention between lieutenant general Burgoyne and major general Gates.* The principal articles, exclusive of those which related to the provision and accommodation of the army in its way to Boston, and during its stay at that place, were:

That the army should march out of the camp with all the honours of war and its camp artillery, to a fixed place, where they were to deposit their arms and leave the artillery: To be allowed a free embarkation and passage to Europe, from Boston, upon condition of their not serving again in America, during the present war: The army not to be separated, particularly the men from the officers: Roll-calling and other duties of regularity to be permitted: The officers to be admitted on parole, and to wear their side arms: All private property to be retained, and the public delivered upon honour: No baggage to be searched or molested: All persons, of whatever country, apper-

taining to, or following the camp, to be fully comprehended in the terms of capitulation, and the Canadians to be returned to their own country, liable to its conditions.

Assuredly, these conditions were very honourable for the British army, considering its ruined state and irretrievable circumstances: but it obtained still more from the magnanimity of general Gates. From tenderness towards the feelings of the vanquished, he ordered his army to retire within their lines, that they might not witness the shame of the English, when they piled their arms.

This conduct demonstrated not only the humanity but the clemency and elevation of character which distinguished the American general; for he was already informed of the horrible ravages recently committed by general Vaughan, upon the right bank of the Hudson, where, imitating the usage of barbarians, he had laid in ashes, and utterly destroyed, the fine village of *Æsopus*. It is our duty not to pass without mention, that while Gates in the whole course of this campaign upon the Hudson, displayed all the talents which constitute an able and valiant general, he proved himself not to want any of those qualities which characterize a benevolent and generous heart. Humane towards all whom the fortune of war had thrown into his hands, he was eminently attentive to those who were sick, and suffered them to want for no succour within his power to administer.

The day of the capitulation, the American army amounted to near fifteen thousand men, of whom about ten thousand were regular troops: the English army to five thousand seven hundred and ninety-one,

of whom two thousand four hundred and twelve were Germans, and three thousand three hundred and seventy-nine English.

The Americans acquired a fine train of brass artillery, amounting to forty-two pieces of different sorts and sizes, four thousand six hundred muskets, an immense quantity of cartridges, bombs, balls and other implements of war.

Such was the fate of the British expedition upon the banks of the Hudson. It had been undertaken with singular confidence of success, but the obstacles proved so formidable that those who had expected from it such brilliant results, were themselves its victims; and those it had alarmed at first, derived from it the most important advantages. There can be no doubt, that, if it was planned with ability, as to us it appears to have been, it was conducted with imprudence by those who were entrusted with its execution. For, it is to be remarked, that its success depended entirely on the combined efforts of the generals who commanded upon the lakes, and of those who had the management of the war in the state of New-York. But far from moving in concert, when one advanced, the other retired. When Carleton had obtained the command of the lakes, Howe, instead of ascending the Hudson, towards Albany, carried his arms into New-Jersey, and advanced upon the Delaware. When, afterwards, Burgoyne entered Ticonderoga in triumph, Howe embarked upon the expedition against Philadelphia; and thus the army of Canada was deprived of the assistance it expected from New York.



Perhaps Howe imagined that the reduction of such a city as Philadelphia, would so confound the Americans, and so derange their plans, that they would either immediately submit, or make but a feeble resistance. Perhaps also he believed that by attacking the centre, and as it were, the very heart of the confederation, he effected the most useful diversion in favour of the army of the north, thereby depriving the Americans of the ability to oppose it with a sufficient force upon the Hudson. Finally, it is not impossible, that listening to his ambition, he had flattered himself that with his own means alone he could acquire the exclusive glory of having put an end to the war. But whatever might have been the importance of the acquisition of Philadelphia, every one must readily perceive how much greater was that of the junction at Albany, of the two armies of Canada and of New York. It was very doubtful whether the conquest of a single city could decide the issue of the war; whereas the juncture of the armies, offered almost an assurance of it. It should also be considered that the Americans, in order to prevent this junction, would have risked a pitched battle, the success of which could scarcely be doubtful, and which could have formed no obstacle to the eventual union. Besides, when two armies have the same object in view, is it not evident that they can operate with more concert and effect, when they are near to each other, than while remotely separated? We may therefore consider this expedition as having been wisely calculated in its design, and even in the means of execution, if we except that scourge of the savages, which must be imputed to the British ministers. Bating this fault,

they did not, in our opinion, deserve the reproaches with which they were loaded, as well in parliament as by the writers of the opposite party. Perhaps also they erred in this, that having too great confidence in the reputation, rank and military experience of Sir William Howe, they neglected to send him more precise instructions. For it appears from the best information we have found upon this subject, that the orders given to that general in regard to his co-operation with the army of Canada, were rather discretionary than absolute: but all the ruin of the enterprise is clearly attributable to this want of co-operation. Gates, after the victory, immediately despatched colonel Wilkinson to carry the happy tidings to Congress. On being introduced into the Hall, he said: "The whole British army has laid down arms at Saratoga; our own, full of vigour and courage, expect your orders: it is for your wisdom to decide where the country may still have need of their services." The Congress voted thanks to general Gates and to his army. They decreed that he should be presented with a medal of gold, to be struck expressly in commemoration of so glorious a victory: On one side of it was the bust of the general, with these words around: "*Horatio Gates, Duci strenuo*; and in the middle, *Comitia Americana*. On the reverse, Burgoyne was represented in the attitude of delivering his sword; and in the back ground, on the one side and on the other were seen the two armies of England and of America. At the top were these words: *Salus regionum septentrion*; and at the foot, *Hoste ad Saratogam in deditione accepto. Die XVII Oct. MDCCLXXVII*. It would be difficult to describe

the transports of joy which the news of this event excited among the Americans. They began to flatter themselves with a still more happy future: no one any longer entertained a doubt of independence. All hoped, and not without much reason, that a success of this importance would at length determine France, and the other European powers that waited for her example, to declare themselves in favour of America. *There could no longer be any question respecting the future: all danger had ceased of espousing the cause of a people too feeble to defend themselves.*

While Burgoyne found himself in the most critical situation, Clinton, in the beginning of October, had embarked at New York, with about three thousand men, upon his expedition up the Hudson for his relief. The Americans, commanded by general Putnam, occupied the steep mountains between which this river flows with rapidity, and which begin to rise in the vicinity of Peek's-Kill. In addition to the natural strength of the places in the midst of these mountains, the banks of the Hudson being almost inaccessible, the Americans had secured the passages in divers modes. About six miles above Peek's-Kill, upon the western bank, they had two forts, called the one Montgomery, and the other Clinton, separated only by a torrent which, gushing from the neighbouring heights, falls into the river. Their situation, upon heights so precipitous that it was impossible to climb them, entirely commanded the course of the Hudson. There was no other way by which the enemy could approach them but that of penetrating into the mountains a little below, towards Stony-Point, and marching through narrow and difficult paths. But

such were these defiles, that if they had been suitably guarded, it would have been not only dangerous, but absolutely impracticable to thread them. To prevent the enemy from passing above the forts by water, chevaux-de-frize were sunken in the river, and a boom extended from bank to bank. This boom was covered by an immense chain, stretched at some distance in its front. These works were remarkable for their perfection, and had been executed with equal industry and difficulty. They were defended by the artillery of the forts, by a frigate, and by several galleys, stationed a little above the boom. Such were the fortifications which the Americans had constructed upon the right bank, and even in the bed of the Hudson, in order to secure these passages, which had been the object of their solicitude from the commencement of hostilities; they being in effect the most defensible barriers against a descent of the enemy from Canada. Upon the left bank, on a high point of land, four or five miles below Forts Montgomery and Clinton, they had erected a fort to which they gave the name of *Independence*, and another called *Constitution*, about six miles above the same forts, on an island near the eastern shore. They had also there interrupted the navigation of the river by chevaux-de-frize and a boom.

General Putnam guarded these different passages with a corps of six hundred regular troops, and some militia, of whom the number was uncertain. An American officer named Clinton commanded in the forts.

The British general knew perfectly well that to attack Forts Clinton and Montgomery in front, would



have been a vain attempt. He therefore formed the design of marching to the assault upon their rear, by the defiles which commence near Stony-Point. But in order to divert the Americans from the thought of re-enforcing the garrisons, he resolved to make such motions upon the left bank, as should alarm them for the safety of Fort Independence. On the fifth of October he landed all his troops at Verplank's-Point, a little below Peek's-Kill, where general Putnam had established his head-quarters. Putnam immediately retired to the strong heights in his rear. The English having re-embarked the greater part of their troops in the night, landed by break of day upon the right bank, at Stony-Point; without loss of time they entered the defiles and marched towards the forts. In the meantime, the manœuvres of the vessels, and the appearance of the small detachment left at Verplanks-Point, persuaded Putnam that the enemy meditated an attack on Fort Independence. The English during this interval were making the best of their way through the mountains. Governor Clinton had not discovered their approach till very late. They appeared before the two forts at nearly the same time, and having without difficulty repulsed the advanced parties which had been sent out to retard them, they furiously began their attack. Their ships of war had also now made their appearance, and supported them with a near fire. The Americans, though surprised, defended themselves with courage for a considerable length of time; but at length, unable to sustain the reiterated efforts of the assailants, and too feeble to man their fortifications sufficiently, after a severe loss in killed and wounded, they retired.

Those who knew the ground, among whom was governor Clinton, escaped. The slaughter was however great, the English being irritated by the opposition they met, and by the loss of some favourite officers. The Americans set fire to their frigates and galleys, which, with their stores and ammunition, were all consumed; but the English got possession of the boom and chain.

In a day or two after, Forts Independence and Constitution, upon the approach of the enemy with his land and naval forces, were set on fire, and evacuated by their defenders. Tryon was sent on the ninth, at the head of a detachment, to destroy a thriving settlement, called Continental Village, where the republicans had deposited a great quantity of stores.

Thus fell into the power of the English these important passages of the mountains of the Hudson, which the Americans had laboured to defend by every mode of fortification. They were justly considered as the keys of the county of Albany. It is therefore evident, that if the royalists had been more numerous, they might have extended an efficacious succour to the army of Burgoyne, and perhaps, decided in their favour the final issue of the northern war. But they could not take part in it, as well because they were much too weak, as that Putnam, whose army was now increased by the militia of Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, to six thousand men, menaced them both in front and rear.

Unable to conquer, the English set themselves to sack the country. The thirteenth of October, Sir James Wallace, with a flying squadron of light frigates, and general Vaughan with a considerable de-

tachment of troops, made an excursion up the river, carrying slaughter and destruction wherever they went; a barbarity of conduct the more execrable, as it was not justified by the least necessity or utility. They marched to a rich and flourishing village, called Kingston or *Æsopus*, upon the western bank of the river; having driven the republicans out of it by a furious cannonade, they set fire to it on every side. All was consumed; not a house was left standing. Extensive magazines of provisions and military stores, were also consigned to the flames. In order to justify these atrocities, it was alleged by Vaughan that the Americans had fired through the windows; a fact which they denied with greater probability of truth. For, it appears that they evacuated the town as soon as they saw the royal troops were disembarked upon the neighbouring shore. The English committed these excesses at the very time that Burgoyne was receiving from general Gates the most honourable conditions for himself and a ruined army.

The American wrote Vaughan a letter full of energy and just indignation; he complained in sharp terms of the burning of *Æsopus*, and of the horrible devastations committed upon the two banks of the Hudson. He concluded with saying: "Is it thus that the generals of the king expect to make converts to the royal cause? Their cruelties operate a contrary effect: independence is founded upon the universal disgust of the people. The fortune of war has delivered into my hands older and abler generals than general Vaughan is reputed to be; their condition may one day become his, and then no human power can save him from the just vengeance of an offended people."

But Vaughan and Wallace having heard that Gates was marching rapidly upon them, resolved not to wait his approach. Having dismantled the forts, and carrying off their booty, they retired from this quarter, and uniting with the remainder of the troops of Clinton, returned with no ordinary speed to New York.

Upon the whole, the loss which the United States sustained from this expedition of the English upon the banks of the Hudson, was extremely severe; for it being universally believed that these elevated and precipitous places were absolutely inaccessible to the fury of the enemy, the Americans had deposited there an immense quantity of arms, ammunition and stores of all sorts.

The artillery lost, including that of the forts, and that of the vessels destroyed or taken, amounted to more than a hundred pieces of different sizes. To which must be added, fifteen or twenty thousand pounds of powder, balls in proportion, and all the implements necessary to the daily service of the artillery.

Meanwhile the captive army was marched towards Boston. On its departure from Saratoga, it passed in the midst of the ranks of the victorious troops, who were formed in order of battle for this purpose along the road and upon the hills which border the two sides of it. The English expected to be scoffed at and insulted. Not an American uttered a syllable; a memorable example of moderation and military discipline! The prisoners, particularly those incorrigible Germans, ravaged whatever they could lay their hands on during the march: the inhabitants could judge by what they did, being vanquished, of



what they would have done, had they been victors. They arrived at Boston, and were lodged in the barracks of Cambridge. The inhabitants held them in abhorrence; they could not forget the burning of Charlestown, and the late devastations.

Burgoyne, after the capitulation, experienced the most courteous attentions on the part of the American generals. Gates invited him to his table: He appeared silent and dejected. The conversation was guarded, and to spare his feelings nothing was said of the late events; only he was asked how he could find in his heart to burn the houses of poor people. He answered that such were his orders, and that, besides, he was authorized to do it by the laws of war. Certain individuals in New England, without delicacy as without reserve, loaded him with insults. But this was confined to the populace. Well educated men treated him with marked civility. General Schuyler, among others, politely despatched an aid-de-camp, to accompany him to Albany. He lodged him in his own house, where his wife received him in the most flattering manner. Yet Burgoyne, in the neighbourhood of Saratoga, where Schuyler possessed extensive estates, had devoted to the flames his magnificent villa, with its moveables and dependencies, valued at more than thirty-seven thousand dollars. At Boston, Burgoyne was likewise lodged in the habitation of general Heath, who commanded in Massachusetts: he there wanted for no attention. He walked at his pleasure through the city, without ever having found occasion to complain of outrage.

But the other officers did not experience the same reception: the Bostonians would not lodge them in their houses, and therefore it became necessary to distribute them in the barracks. Burgoyne complained of it, at first, to general Heath, and afterwards to Gates. He insisted that a treatment of his officers so little conformable to their rank, was a violation of the convention of Saratoga. Moreover, fearing that the season, already advanced, might not permit the transports to arrive soon enough at Boston, where the embarkation was appointed by the capitulation, he requested Washington to consent that it should take place at Newport, in Rhode Island, or at some other port of the Sound. Washington, not thinking himself authorized to decide upon this request, submitted it to the determination of Congress. That body was much displeased at this verbal discussion, and especially at the imputation of a breach of faith; apprehending it might be a pretext which Burgoyne was inclined to use for not keeping his own.

It appeared, besides, to the Congress, that the vessels assembled at Boston for the transport of the troops, were neither sufficient for so great a number, nor furnished with provisions enough for so long a voyage. Finally, they observed that the English had not strictly fulfilled the stipulation in respect to the surrender of arms, as they had retained their cartridge-boxes, and other effects, which, if not actually arms, are of indispensable use to those who bear them. Gates undertook to justify the English upon this point, and with complete success. But the Congress had need of a quarrel, and therefore sought the grounds. They wished to retard the embarkation of

the prisoners, under the apprehension that, in defiance of treaties, they would go to join general Howe, or at least, that arriving too early in England, the government would be able to fill their place immediately by an equal number in America. They decreed therefore that general Burgoyne should furnish the rolls of his army, that a list might be taken of the name and rank of every commissioned officer; with the name, former place of abode, occupation, size, age and description of every non-commissioned officer and private soldier.

Burgoyne considered this demand extraordinary, and therefore resorted to various subterfuges in order to evade compliance. General Howe, on his part, proceeded with much subtilty and illiberality in the exchange of prisoners; and thus the discontents and suspicions were continually increased.

The ambiguous conduct of each of these generals alarmed the Congress exceedingly; they decreed, therefore that the embarkation of Burgoyne and all the captive troops should be suspended, until a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga should be properly notified to Congress by the court of Great Britain. At the same time they sent directions to general Heath, to order any vessels which might have arrived, or which should arrive, for the transportation of the army, to quit the port of Boston without delay. An additional force was also provided to guard the British army. Burgoyne then addressed a letter to Congress, in which he endeavoured to justify his conduct; he protested that he had never thought himself released from the conditions of the convention of Saratoga, and affirmed that all his offi-

cers individually were ready to give their written promise to observe all the articles of that capitulation. All was in vain: Congress was inflexible: and the prisoners had to make up their minds to remain in America. This decision they took in great dudgeon; and it served as a pretext for the partisans of the ministry to charge the Americans with perfidy. We shall not undertake to decide whether the fears manifested by Congress had a real foundation; and we shall abstain as well from blaming the imprudence of Burgoyne, as from praising the wisdom, or condemning the distrust of the Congress.

It is but too certain that in these civil dissensions and animosities, appearances become realities, and probabilities demonstration. Accordingly, at that time the Americans complained bitterly of British perfidy, and the English of American want of faith.

Finding that he could obtain nothing for others, Burgoyne solicited for himself, and easily got permission to return to England. As soon as he was arrived in London, he began to declaim with virulence against those ministers, whose favour a little before he had used every means to captivate, and who had given him, to the prejudice of a general approved by long services, an opportunity to distinguish his name by a glorious enterprise. Burgoyne wanted neither an active genius nor military science and experience: but formed in the wars of Germany, his movements were made with caution, and extreme deliberation, and never till all circumstances united to favour them. He would, upon no consideration, have attacked an enemy, until the minutest precepts of the military art had all been faithfully observed.



This was totally mistaking the nature of the American war, which required to be carried on with vigour and spirit. In a region like America, broken by so many defiles and fastnesses, against an enemy so able to profit of them, by scouring the country, by preparing ambuscades, by intercepting convoys and retreats, the celerity which might involve a transient danger, was assuredly preferable to the slowness which, under its apparent security, concealed a future and inevitable danger.

This general lost the opportunity to conquer, because he would never run the risk of defeat; and as he would put nothing in the power of fortune, she seemed to have thought him unworthy of her favours. Moreover, the employment of savages in the wars of civilized nations, was never the source of durable success; nor was it ever the practice of prudent generals to provoke the enemy by threats, or to exasperate him by ravages and conflagrations.

While these events were passing in the north, admiral and general Howe were at sea, undecided whether to enter the Delaware, or to take the route of the Chesapeake bay, in order to march against Philadelphia. Washington continued in New Jersey, prepared to defend the passages of the Hudson, if the British army should have taken that direction, or to cover Philadelphia, should it threaten that city. But while waiting for certain information respecting the movements and plans of the British generals, he neglected none of those measures which were proper to place his army in a situation to resist the storm that was about to burst upon it. He collected arms and ammunition, called out the militia of the neighbour-

ing provinces, and ordered to join him all the regiments of regular troops that were not necessary for the defence of the Hudson. These different corps were continually exercised in arms and military evolutions; wherein they derived great advantage from the example and instructions of the French officers who had recently entered the service of the United States. Among these, the splendour of rank added to the fascination of his personal qualities, eminently distinguished the Marquis de la Fayette. Animated by the enthusiasm which generous minds are wont to feel for great enterprises, he espoused the cause of the Americans with a partiality common to almost all the men of that time, and particularly to the French. He considered it not only just, but exalted and sacred: the affection he bore it was the more ardent, as, independently of the candour of his character, he was of that age, not exceeding nineteen years, in which good appears not only good, but fair, and man not only loves, but is enamoured. Inflamed with desire to take part in events which were echoed by all Europe, he had communicated, about the close of 1776, to the American commissioners his intention of repairing to America; they had encouraged him in that resolution. But when they were informed of the reverses of New Jersey, compelled almost to despair of the success of the revolution, they, with honourable sincerity, endeavoured to dissuade him from it. They even declared to him that their affairs were so deranged by this unhappy news, that they were not able to charter a vessel for his passage to America. It is said the gallant youth replied, that it was then precisely the moment to serve their cause; that the more

people were discouraged, the greater utility would result from his departure, and that if they could not furnish him with a ship, he would freight one at his own expense to convey himself and their despatches to America. And as he said, he also did. The people were astonished, and much conversation was excited by this determination on the part of so illustrious a personage. The court of France, either to save appearances, and avoid giving umbrage to England, or being really displeased at this departure, forbade La Fayette to embark. It is even asserted, that ships were despatched with orders to arrest him in the waters of the West Indies. Tearing himself, however, from the arms of his beloved wife, who was in all the bloom of youth, he put to sea, and steering wide of those islands, arrived in Georgetown. The Congress omitted none of those demonstrations which could persuade the young Frenchman, and all the American people, in what esteem they held his person, and how much they felt the sacrifices he had made, and the dangers to which he had exposed himself, and was still exposed, for being come to offer his support to the tottering cause of America.

Touched by this flattering reception, he promised to exert himself to the utmost of his knowledge and ability; but requested permission to serve at first only as a volunteer and at his own expense. This generosity and modesty of the Marquis de la Fayette, delighted the Americans the more, as some of the French who had entered their service were never to be satisfied in the articles either of pay, or of rank. It was Silas Deane who had encouraged these exorbitant expectations, by entering in France into such

engagements with those officers, as could not be confirmed in America. This conduct had greatly displeased the Congress, and was what chiefly determined them to send him, soon after, a successor in the person of John Adams. The Congress decreed, that "Whereas the Marquis de la Fayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States were engaged, had left his family and connections, and at his own expense come over to offer his services without pension or particular allowance, and was anxious to risk his life in their defence, they accepted his services; and that in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family and connections, he was invested with the rank of major general in the army of the United States." The Marquis having repaired to the camp, was received with consideration by general Washington, and soon there was established between them that warm friendship which subsisted until the death of the American general.

The American army was at this time strong in number: it amounted, including however the militia, little accustomed to regular battle, to fifteen thousand men. It was full of confidence in its chiefs; and animated by their example and exhortations. The news was then received that the British fleet was in sight of Cape May, at the mouth of the Delaware, steering eastward. Washington immediately conceived some alarm for the banks of the Hudson, which he had always watched with care from the commencement of the war. He ordered the troops that were to come from Peek-Kill to join him in New Jersey, not to move; and those who were already on the march, to halt in their positions.



The seventh of August, the British squadron was perceived anew at the entrance of the Delaware; but it disappeared a little after, and was not heard of again for several days. The commander-in-chief could not penetrate the design of the enemy; still in doubt, he continued stationary, not knowing where the tempest was to strike. But after a certain lapse of time, even the length of delay led him to suspect that the views of Howe were by no means directed towards the Hudson; for the winds having prevailed for a long time from the south, if such had been his intention he would already have been arrived at the destined spot. Washington was therefore inclined to believe that the English meditated an expedition against some part of the southern provinces. He felt indeed some solicitude for the bay of Chesapeake; but, as it was at no great distance from the mouths of the Delaware, the enemy ought already to have made his appearance there. Upon these considerations, he more feared for the safety of Charleston, South Carolina; but even if so, he was unable to arrive in time to the relief of that city. Besides, that country was naturally unhealthy, and especially at the present season.

There was also danger that Howe might re-embark his troops, and make a sudden push against Philadelphia, which, in the absence of the army, must inevitably fall into his power. It therefore appeared much more prudent to maintain a position which admitted of watching over Pennsylvania, and to leave the Carolinas with their own means only to defend themselves as well as they could against the invasions of the enemy. But in order to compensate the losses which might perhaps ensue in that quarter, Washing-

ton resolved to march with all his troops towards the Hudson, to be ready to turn his arms according to circumstances, either against Burgoyne towards Fort Edward, or against Clinton towards New York, then divested of the greater part of its defenders.

He had scarcely formed this determination, when he was informed that the enemy had appeared with all his forces in the Chesapeake. This intelligence put an end to all his uncertainties, and he then saw distinctly the course he had to pursue. He despatched orders to all the detached corps to join him by forced marches in the environs of Philadelphia, for the purpose of proceeding thence to the head of the Chesapeake. The militia of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and the northern parts of Virginia, were ordered to take arms and repair to the principal army.

While these preparations were making on the part of the Americans, the English fleet entered with full sails into the Chesapeake bay, and profiting of a favourable wind, proceeded as far up as the point called Elk-Head. From the time of its departure from Sandy-Hook this squadron had experienced the most contrary winds, and had been more than a week in doubling the capes of Delaware. The English generals were there informed that the Americans had so effectually obstructed the navigation of that river that it would be equally dangerous and fruitless to attempt the passage up to Philadelphia.

Though some persons maintain that they might easily have disembarked at Wilmington, whence there was an excellent road leading directly to that city. However this was, they preferred to proceed further south, and to sail up the Chesapeake bay as

far as that part of Maryland which borders on Pennsylvania, and is at no great distance from Philadelphia. But in the passage from the Delaware to the Chesapeake the winds were so constantly unfavourable that they could not enter the bay till towards the last of August. This delay was excessively prejudicial to the English army: the troops being crowded into the vessels along with the horses and all the baggage, in the midst of the hottest season of the year. The health of the soldiers would have suffered still more, if the generals had not taken the precaution to put on board a large stock of fresh provisions and a copious supply of water. The sea became more propitious in the Chesapeake, and the squadron soon gained the coasts of Maryland. Thus the two armies advanced, each towards the other, amidst the anxious expectation of the American people.

About this time an expedition was undertaken by general Sullivan, against Staten Island, the commencement of which had created hopes of a more happy termination. He landed without opposition and took many prisoners, but was afterwards repulsed with heavy loss. He then rapidly retired towards Philadelphia. On the twenty-fifth of August, the British army, eighteen thousand strong, was disembarked not far from the head of the river Elk. It was plentifully furnished with all the equipage of war, excepting the defect of horses, as well for the cavalry as for the baggage. The scarcity of forage had caused many of them to perish the preceding winter, and a considerable number had died also in the late passage.

This was a serious disadvantage for the royal troops; who, in the vast plains of Pennsylvania, might have employed cavalry with singular effect. On the twenty-seventh, the English van-guard arrived at the head of the Elk, and the day following at Grays-Hill. Here it was afterwards joined by the rear-guard under general Knyphausen, who had been left upon the coast to cover the debarkation of the stores and artillery.

The whole army took post behind the river Christiana, having Newark upon the right, and Pencada or Atkins on the left. A column commanded by Lord Cornwallis having fallen in with Maxwell's riflemen, routed and pursued them as far as the further side of White-Clay Creek, with the loss of some dead and wounded.

The American army, in order to encourage the partisans of independence and over-awe the disaffected, marched through the city of Philadelphia: it afterwards advanced towards the enemy, and encamped behind White-Clay Creek. A little after, leaving only the riflemen in the camp, Washington retired with the main body of his army behind the Red-Clay Creek, occupying with his right wing the town of Newport, situated near the Christiana, and upon the great road to Philadelphia; his left was at Hockesen. But this line was little capable of defence.

The enemy, re-enforced by the rear guard under general Grant, threatening with his right the centre of the Americans, extended his left as if with the intention of turning their right flank. Washington saw the danger and retired with his troops behind the Brandywine; he encamped on the rising grounds



which extend from Chadsford, in the direction of north-west to south-east. The riflemen of Maxwell scoured the right bank of the Brandywine, in order to harass and retard the enemy. The militia under the command of general Armstrong, guarded a passage below the principal encampment of Washington, and the right wing lined the banks of the river higher up, where the passages were more difficult. The passage of Chadsford, as the most practicable of all, was defended by the chief force of the army. The troops being thus disposed, the American general waited the approach of the English. Although the Brandywine, being fordable almost every where, could not serve as a sufficient defence against the impetuosity of the enemy, yet Washington had taken post upon its banks, from a conviction that a battle was now inevitable, and that Philadelphia could only be saved by a victory. General Howe displayed the front of his army, but not however without great circumspection. Being arrived at Kennen-Square, a short distance from the river, he detached his light horse to the right upon Wilmington, to the left upon the Lancaster road, and in front towards Chadsford. The two armies found themselves within seven miles of each other, the Brandywine flowing between them.

Early in the morning of the eleventh of September, the British army marched to the enemy. Howe had formed his army in two columns: the right commanded by general Knyphausen, the left by Lord Cornwallis. His plan was, that while the first should make repeated feints to attempt the passage of Chadsford, in order to occupy the attention of the republicans, the second should take a long circuit to the up-

per part of the river, and cross at a place where it is divided into two shallow streams. The English marksmen fell in with those of Maxwell, and a smart skirmish was immediately engaged. The latter were at first repulsed; but being re-enforced from the camp, they compelled the English to retire in their turn. But at length, they also were re-enforced, and Maxwell was constrained to withdraw his detachment behind the river. Meanwhile, Knyphausen advanced with his column, and commenced a furious cannonade upon the passage of Chadsford, making all his dispositions as if he intended to force it. The Americans defended themselves with gallantry, and even passed several detachments of light troops to the other side, in order to harass the enemy's flanks. But after a course of skirmishes, sometimes advancing, and at others obliged to retire, they were finally, with an eager pursuit, driven over the river. Knyp-hausen then appeared more than ever determined to pass the ford; he stormed, and kept up an incredible noise. In this manner the attention of the Americans was fully occupied in the neighbourhood of Chadsford. Meanwhile, Lord Cornwallis, at the head of the second column, took a circuitous march to the left, and gained unperceived the forks of the Brandywine. By this rapid movement, he passed both branches of the river at Trimble's and at Jeffery's Fords, without opposition, about two o'clock in the afternoon, and then turning short down the river, took the road to Dilworth, in order to fall upon the right flank of the American army. The republican general, however, received intelligence of this movement about noon, and, as it usually happens in similar

cases, the reports exaggerated its importance exceedingly: it being represented that general Howe commanded this division in person. Washington therefore decided immediately for the most judicious, though boldest measure: this was, to pass the river with the centre and left wing of his army, and overwhelm Knyphausen by the most furious attack. He justly reflected that the advantage he should obtain upon the enemy's right, would amply compensate the loss that his own might sustain at the same time. Accordingly, he ordered general Sullivan to pass the Brandywine with his division at an upper ford, and attack the left of Knyphausen, while he, in person, should cross lower down and fall upon the right of that general.

They were both already in motion in order to execute this design, when a second report arrived, which represented what had really taken place as false, or in other words, that the enemy had not crossed the two branches of the river, and that he had not made his appearance upon the right flank of the American troops. Deceived by this false intelligence, Washington desisted; and Greene, who had already passed with the van-guard, was ordered back. In the midst of these uncertainties, the commander-in-chief at length received the positive assurance, not only that the English had appeared upon the left bank, but also that they were about to fall in great force upon the right wing. It was composed of the brigades of generals Stephens, Stirling and Sullivan: the first was the most advanced, and consequently the nearest to the English; the two others were posted in the order of their rank, that of Sullivan being next to the

centre. This general was immediately detached from the main body to support the two former brigades, and, being the senior officer, took the command of the whole wing. Washington himself, followed by general Greene, approached with two strong divisions towards this wing, and posted himself between it and the corps he had left at Chadsford, under general Wayne, to oppose the passage of Knyphausen. These two divisions, under the immediate orders of the commander-in-chief, served as a corps of reserve, ready to march, according to circumstances, to the succour of Sullivan or of Wayne.

But the column of Cornwallis was already in sight of the Americans. Sullivan drew up his troops on the commanding ground above Birmingham meeting-house, with his left extending towards the Brandywine, and both his flanks covered with very thick woods. His artillery was advantageously planted upon the neighbouring hills; But it appears that Sullivan's own brigade, having taken a long circuit, arrived too late upon the field of battle, and had not yet occupied the position assigned it, when the action commenced. The English having reconnoitred the dispositions of the Americans, immediately formed, and fell upon them with the utmost impetuosity. The engagement became equally fierce on both sides about four o'clock in the afternoon. For some length of time the Americans defended themselves with great valour, and the carnage was terrible. But such was the emulation which invigorated the efforts of the English and Hessians, that neither the advantages of situation, nor a heavy and well supported fire of small arms and artillery, nor the unshaken courage of



the Americans, were able to resist their impetuosity. The light infantry, chasseurs, grenadiers and guards, threw themselves with such fury into the midst of the republican battalions, that they were forced to give way. Their left flank was first thrown into confusion, but the rout soon became general. The vanquished fled into the woods in their rear: the victors pursued, and advanced by the great road towards Dilworth. On the first fire of the artillery, Washington, having no doubt of what was passing, had pushed forward the reserve to the succour of Sullivan. But this corps, on approaching the field of battle, fell in with the flying soldiers of Sullivan, and perceived that no hope remained of retrieving the fortune of the day. General Greene, by a judicious manœuvre, opened his ranks to receive the fugitives, and after their passage having closed them anew, he retired in good order; checking the pursuit of the enemy by a continual fire of the artillery which covered his rear. Having come to a defile, covered on both sides with woods, he drew up his men there, and again faced the enemy. His corps was composed of Virginians and Pennsylvanians: they defended themselves with gallantry; the former especially, commanded by colonel Stevens, made an heroic stand.

Knyphausen finding the Americans to be fully engaged on their right, and observing that the corps opposed to him at Chadsford was enfeebled by the troops which had been detached to the succour of Sullivan, began to make dispositions for crossing the river in reality. The passage of Chadsford was defended by an intrenchment and battery. The republicans stood firm at first;—but upon intelligence of the

defeat of their right, and seeing some of the British troops who had penetrated through the woods, come out upon their flank, they retired in disorder, abandoning their artillery and munitions to the German general. In their retreat, or rather flight, they passed behind the position of general Greene, who still defended himself, and was the last to quit the field of battle. Finally, it being already dark, after a long and obstinate conflict, he also retired. The whole army retreated that night to Chester, and the day following to Philadelphia.

There the fugitives arrived incessantly, having effected their escape through bye-ways and circuitous routes. The victors passed the night on the field of battle. If darkness had not arrived seasonably, it is very probable that the whole American army would have been destroyed. The loss of the republicans was computed at about three hundred killed, six hundred wounded, and near four hundred taken prisoners. They also lost ten field pieces and a howitzer. The loss in the royal army was not in proportion, being something under five hundred, of which the slain did not amount to one fifth.

The French officers were of great utility to the Americans as well in forming the troops, as in rallying them when thrown into confusion. One of them, the Baron St. Ovary, was made a prisoner, to the great regret of Congress, who bore him a particular esteem. Captain de Fleury had a horse killed under him in the hottest of the action. The Congress gave him another a few days after. The Marquis de la Fayette, whilst he was endeavouring, by his words and example, to rally the fugitives, was wounded in the

leg. He continued, nevertheless, to fulfil his duty both as a soldier in fighting, and as a general, in cheering the troops and re-establishing order. The Count Pulawski, a noble Pole, also displayed an undaunted courage, at the head of the light horse. The Congress manifested their sense of his merit by giving him, shortly after, the rank of brigadier, and the command of the cavalry.

If all the American troops in the action of the Brandywine had fought with the same intrepidity as the Virginians and Pennsylvanians, and, especially, if Washington had not been led into error by a false report, perhaps notwithstanding the inferiority of number and the imperfection of arms, he would have gained the victory, or, at least, would have made it more sanguinary to the English. However this might have been, it must be admitted that general Howe's order of battle was excellent; that his movements were executed with as much ability as promptitude; and that his troops, English as well as German, behaved admirably well.

The day after the battle, towards evening, the English despatched a detachment of light troops to Wilmington, a place situated at the confluence of the Christiana and the Brandywine. There they took prisoner the governor of the state of Delaware, and seized a considerable quantity of coined money, as well as other property, both public and private, and some papers of importance.

The other towns of lower Pennsylvania followed the fortune of the victorious party: they were all received into the king's obedience.

The Congress, far from being discouraged by so heavy a reverse, endeavoured, on the contrary, to persuade the people that it was by no means so decisive, but that affairs might soon resume a favourable aspect. They gave out, that though the English had remained in possession of the field of battle, yet their victory was far from being complete, since their loss was not less, and perhaps greater, than that of the Americans. They affirmed that although their army was in part dispersed, still it was safe; and, in a few days, would be rallied, and in a condition to meet the enemy. Finally, that bold demonstrations might inspire that confidence which, perhaps, words alone would not have produced, the Congress appeared to have no idea of quitting Philadelphia. They ordered that fifteen hundred regulars should be marched to that city from Peek-Kill; that the militia of New Jersey, with those of Philadelphia, the brigade of general Smallwood, and a regiment of the line, then at Alexandria, should proceed with all possible despatch to re-enforce the principal army in Pennsylvania. They empowered general Washington to impress all wag-gons, horses, provisions, and other articles necessary for the use of the army, on giving certificates to the owners, who were to be satisfied from the continental treasury. The commander-in-chief exerted himself to inspire his troops with fresh courage: he persuaded them that they had not shown themselves at all inferior to their adversaries; and that another time they might decide in their favour what was left in doubt at the Brandywine. He gave them a day for refreshment, in the environs of Germantown; but took care to send out the lightest and freshest corps upon the



right bank of the Schuylkill, as far as Chester, in order to watch the motions of the enemy, to repress his excursions, and at the same time to collect the dispersed and straggling Americans. As to himself, he repaired to Philadelphia, where he had frequent conferences with the Congress, in order to concert with them the measures to be pursued for the re-establishment of affairs. But the fifteenth he returned to camp, and re-passing, with all his forces, from the left to the right bank of the Schuylkill, proceeded on the Lancaster road as far as the Warren tavern, with the intention of risking another engagement. Conjecturing that the enemy must be much incumbered with their sick and wounded, he ordered Smallwood to hang with his light troops on their flank or rear, as occasion might require, and do them all the harm he could. At the same time, the bridge over the Schuylkill was ordered to be loosened from its moorings, to swing on the Philadelphia side; and general Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania militia, was directed to guard the passes over that river, for the defence of which M. de Portail, chief of engineers, constructed such sudden works as might be of immediate use.

General Howe, having passed the night of the eleventh on the field of battle, sent the following day a strong detachment to Concord, commanded by general Grant, who was joined afterwards by Lord Cornwallis. They marched together towards Chester, upon the bank of the Delaware, as if they intended to surprise Philadelphia. Howe, with the main body of his army, advanced to gain the Lancaster road, and had arrived on the sixteenth near Goshen, when he received intelligence that Washington was

approaching with all his troops to give him battle, and was already within five miles of Goshen. With great alacrity both armies immediately prepared for action: the advanced parties had met, when there came up so violent a fall of rain, that the soldiers were forced to cease their fire. The Americans, especially, suffered exceedingly from it in their arms and ammunition. Their gun locks not being well secured, many of their muskets were rendered unfit for use. Their cartridge boxes had been so badly constructed as not to protect their powder from the severity of the tempest.

These circumstances compelled Washington to defer the engagement. He therefore re-crossed the Schuylkill at Parkers-Ferry, and encamped upon the eastern bank of that river, on both sides of Perkyomy Creek. But as this retreat left general Smallwood too much exposed to be surrounded by the enemy, general Wayne, with his division, was detached to the rear of the British with orders to join him; and carefully concealing himself and his movements, to seize every occasion which their march might offer, of engaging them to advantage.

The extreme severity of the weather entirely stopped the British army, and prevented any pursuit. They made no other movement than merely to unite their columns, and then took post at Tryduffin, whence they detached a party to seize a magazine of flour and other stores, which the republicans had deposited at Valley-Forge. Howe discovered by his spies that general Wayne, with fifteen hundred men, was lying in the woods in the rear, and not far from the left wing of his army. Suspecting some scheme

of enterprise, he determined to avert the stroke, by causing Wayne to experience the check he destined for him. Accordingly, in the night of the thirteenth, he detached general Grey, with two regiments and a body of light infantry, to surprise the enemy. That general conducted the enterprise with great prudence and activity. Stealing his way through the woods, he arrived undiscovered, about one in the morning, before the encampment of Wayne. Having forced his pickets without noise, the British detachment, guided by the light of their fires, rushed in upon the enemy, torpid with sleep and chilled with terror. In the midst of this obscurity and confusion, a shocking slaughter was executed with bayonets. The Americans lost many of their men, with their baggage, arms and stores. The whole corps must have been cut off, if Wayne had not preserved his coolness: he promptly rallied a few regiments, who withstood the shock of the enemy, and covered the retreat of the others. The loss of the English was very inconsiderable. When this attack commenced, general Smallwood who was coming up to join Wayne, was already within a mile of the field of battle; and, had he commanded troops who were to be relied on, might have given a very different turn to the night. But his militia, who were excessively alarmed, thought only of their own safety; and having fallen in with a party returning from the pursuit of Wayne, they instantly fled in confusion.

Having thus secured his rear, the British general resolved to bring the Americans to action, or to press them so far from Philadelphia as should enable him to push suddenly across the Schuylkill, and turn with-

out danger to his right, in order to take possession of that city. To this end he made such movements upon the western bank, as to give the enemy jealousy that he intended to cross higher up, where the river was more shallow, and after turning his right flank, to seize the extensive magazines of provisions and military stores, which had been established at Reading. In order to oppose so great a mischief, Washington retired with his army up the river, and encamped at Pottsgrove. Howe, on intelligence of this change of the enemy's position, immediately crossed the Schuylkill without opposition; a part of his troops being passed at Gordons-Ford, and the rest lower down at Fat-Land-Ford. On the night of the twenty-third, the whole British army encamped upon the left bank; thus finding itself between the army of Washington and the city of Philadelphia.

It was now self-evident that nothing could save that city from the grasp of the English, unless the American general chose to risk a battle for its rescue.

But Washington, more guided by prudence than by the wishes and clamours of the multitude, abstained from resorting to that fatal experiment. He deemed it a measure of blind temerity to commit the fate of America to the uncertain issue of a general engagement. He daily expected the arrival of the remaining troops of Wayne and Smallwood, the continental troops of Peeks-Kill and the provincial militia of New Jersey, under the command of general Dickinson. The soldiers were less fatigued than worn down by continual marches, bad roads, want of food and sufferings of every denomination. A council of war being assembled, and the condition of the army



considered, it was unanimously decided to remain on the present ground, until the expected re-enforcements should arrive, and to allow the harassed troops a few days for repose.

Washington resolved to proceed in every point with extreme circumspection, holding himself ready to seize the occasions which Heaven might offer him for the glory of its own cause, and for the good of the republic. Philadelphia was therefore abandoned as a prey which could not escape the enemy.

When it was known in that city that the violent rain which fell on the sixteenth, had prevented the two armies from coming to action, and that Washington had been constrained to retire behind the Schuylkill, Congress adjourned itself to the twenty-seventh, at Lancaster. At the same time, the public magazines and archives were evacuated with all diligence; the vessels lying at the wharves were removed up the Delaware. About twenty individuals were taken into custody, the greater part of them Quakers, avowed enemies to the state; having positively refused to give any security in writing, or even verbal attestation, of submission or allegiance to the present government. They were sent off to Staunton, in Virginia, as a place of security.

With unshaken confidence in the virtue of Washington, as a sufficient pledge for the hope of the republic, the Congress invested him with the same dictatorial powers that were conceded him after the reverses of New Jersey. At length, the rumour of the approach of the English increasing from hour to hour, they left the city. Lord Cornwallis entered Philadelphia the twenty-sixth of September, at the head of a

detachment of British and Hessian grenadiers. The rest of the army remained in the camp of Germantown. Thus the rich and populous capital of the whole confederation fell into the power of the royalists, after a sanguinary battle, and a series of manœuvres, no less masterly than painful, of the two armies. The Quakers, and all the other loyalists who had remained there, welcomed the English with transports of gratulation. Washington, descending along the left bank of the Schuylkill, approached within sixteen miles of Germantown. He encamped at Skippach Creek, purposing to accommodate his measures to the state of things.

The loss of Philadelphia did not produce among the Americans a particle of that discouragement which the English had flattered themselves would be the consequence of this event. The latter, on finding themselves masters of that city, erected batteries upon the Delaware, in order to command the whole breadth of the river, prevent any sudden attack by water, and interdict to the republicans all navigation between its upper and lower parts. While they were engaged in these works, the Americans, with the frigate Delaware anchored within five hundred yards of the unfinished batteries, and with some smaller vessels, commenced a very heavy cannonade both upon the batteries and the town. They did not, however, display the judgment which their knowledge of the river might be supposed to afford; for upon the falling of the tide the Delaware grounded so effectually that she could not be got off, which being perceived by the English, they brought their cannon to play upon her with so much effect that she was soon obliged to

strike her colours. The same fire compelled the other vessels to retire up the river, with the loss of a schooner which was driven ashore.

The Americans, under the apprehension of what afterwards happened, that is, of not being able to preserve Philadelphia, had, with great labour and expense, constructed all manner of works to interrupt the navigation of the river, in order to prevent the British fleet from communicating with the troops that might occupy the city. They knew that the army of Washington, when it should have received its re-enforcements, would soon be in a condition to take the field anew, and to cut off the enemy's supplies on the side of Pennsylvania: If, therefore, unable to procure them by water, the English must in a short time be compelled to evacuate the city. Pursuant to this reasoning, the Americans had erected works and batteries upon a flat, low, marshy island, or rather a bank of mud and sand which had been accumulated in the Delaware near the junction of the Schuylkill, and which from its nature was called Mud, but from these defences, Fort-Island. On the opposite shore of New Jersey, at a place called Red-Bank, they had also constructed a fort or redoubt, well covered with heavy artillery. In the deep navigable channel, between or under the cover of these batteries, they had sunk several ranges of frames or machines, the construction of which we have already described in a foregoing book. About three miles lower down, they had sunk other ranges of these machines, and were constructing for their protection some considerable and extensive works, which, though not yet finished, were in such forwardness, as to be provided with artillery,

and to command their object, at a place on the Jersey side, called Billings-Point. These works and machines were further supported by several gallies, mounting heavy cannon, together with two floating batteries, a number of armed vessels and small craft of various kinds, and some fire-ships.

The English well knew the importance of opening for themselves a free communication with the sea, by means of the Delaware; since their operations could never be considered secure, so long as the enemy should maintain positions upon the banks of that river; and accordingly they deliberated upon the means of reducing them. Immediately after the success of the Brandywine, Lord Howe, who commanded the whole fleet, had made sail for the mouth of the Delaware, and several light vessels had already arrived in that river, among others the *Roe-Buck*, commanded by captain Hammond. That officer represented to general Howe, that if sufficient forces were sent to attack the fort at Billings-Point, on the Jersey shore, it might be taken without difficulty; and that he would then take upon himself to open a passage for the vessels through the *chevaux-de-frize*. The general approved this project, and detached two regiments under colonel Stirling, to carry it into effect. The detachment, having crossed the river from Chester, the moment they had set foot upon the Jersey shore, marched with all speed to attack the fort in rear.

The Americans, not thinking themselves able to sustain the enemy's assault, immediately spiked their artillery, set fire to the barracks, and abandoned the place with precipitation. The English waited to de-



stroy or to render unserviceable those parts of the works which fronted the river, and this success, with the spirit and perseverance exhibited by the officers and crews of the ships under his command, enabled Hammond, through great difficulties, to carry the principal object of the expedition into effect, by cutting away and weighing up so much of the chevaux-de-frize as opened a narrow passage for the shipping through this lower barrier.

The two regiments of Stirling returned, after their expedition to Chester, whither another had been sent to meet them, in order that they might all together form a sufficient escort for a large convoy of provisions to the camp.

Washington, who had not left his position at Skip-pach Creek, being informed that three regiments had been thus detached, and knowing that Lord Cornwallis lay at Philadelphia with four battalions of grenadiers, perceived that the army of Howe must be sensibly weakened. He determined, therefore, to avail himself of this favourable circumstance, and to fall unexpectedly upon the British army encamped at Germantown.

He took this resolution with the more confidence, as he was now re-enforced by the junction of the troops from Peeks-Kill and the Maryland militia.

Germantown is a considerable village, about half a dozen miles from Philadelphia, and which, stretching on both sides of the great road to the northward, forms a continued street of two miles in length. The British line of encampment crossed Germantown at right angles about the centre, the left wing extending on the west, from the town to the Schuylkill. That

wing was covered in front, by the mounted and dismounted German chasseurs, who were stationed a little above, towards the American camp; a battalion of light infantry, and the Queen's American rangers were in the front of the right. The centre being posted within the town, was guarded by the fortieth regiment, and another battalion of light infantry stationed about three quarters of a mile above the head of the village. Washington resolved to attack the British by surprise, not doubting that, if he succeeded in breaking them, as they were not only distant, but totally separated from the fleet, his victory must be decisive.

He so disposed his troops, that the divisions of Sullivan and Wayne, flanked by Conway's brigade, were to march down the main road, and entering the town by the way of Chestnut-Hill, to attack the English centre, and the right flank of their left wing: the divisions of Greene and Stephens, flanked by Mac Dougall's brigade, were to take a circuit towards the east, by the Lime-Kiln road, and entering the town at the market-house, to attack the left flank of the right wing. The intention of the American general in seizing the village of Germantown by a double attack, was effectually to separate the right and left wings of the royal army, which must have given him a certain victory. In order that the left flank of the left wing might not contract itself, and support the right flank of the same wing, general Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania militia, was ordered to march down the bridge road upon the banks of the Schuylkill, and endeavour to turn the English, if they should retire from that river. In like manner, to prevent the right

flank of the right wing from going to the succour of the left flank, which rested upon Germantown, the militia of Maryland and Jersey, under generals Smallwood and Forman, were to march down the Old York road, and to fall upon the English on that extremity of their wing. The division of Lord Stirling, and the brigades of generals Nash and Maxwell, formed the reserve. These dispositions being made, Washington quitted his camp at Skippach Creek, and moved towards the enemy, on the third of October, about seven in the evening. Parties of cavalry silently scoured all the roads to seize any individuals who might have given notice to the British general of the danger that threatened him. Washington in person accompanied the column of Sullivan and Wayne. The march was rapid and silent.

At three o'clock in the morning, the British patrols discovered the approach of the Americans: the troops were soon called to arms; each took his post with the precipitation of surprise. About sun-rise the Americans came up. General Conway having driven in the pickets, fell upon the fortieth regiment and the battalion of light infantry. These corps, after a short resistance, being overpowered by numbers, were pressed and pursued into the village. Fortune appeared already to have declared herself in favour of the Americans; and certainly if they had gained complete possession of Germantown, nothing could have frustrated them of the most signal victory. But in this conjuncture, lieutenant colonel Musgrave threw himself, with six companies of the fortieth regiment, into a large and strong stone house, situated near the head of the village, from which he poured

upon the assailants so terrible a fire of musketry that they could advance no further. The Americans attempted to storm this unexpected covert of the enemy, but those within continued to defend themselves with resolution. They finally brought cannon up to the assault, but such was the intrepidity of the English, and the violence of their fire, that it was found impossible to dislodge them. During this time, general Greene had approached the right wing, and routed, after a slight engagement, the light infantry and Queen's rangers. Afterwards, turning a little to his right, and towards Germantown, he fell upon the left flank of the enemy's right wing, and endeavoured to enter the village. Meanwhile, he expected that the Pennsylvania militia, under Armstrong, upon the right, and the militia of Maryland and Jersey, commanded by Smallwood and Forman on the left, would have executed the orders of the commander-in-chief, by attacking and turning, the first the left and the second the right flank of the British army. But either because the obstacles they encountered had retarded them, or that they wanted ardour, the former arrived in sight of the German chasseurs, and did not attack them: the latter appeared too late upon the field of battle.

The consequence was, that general Grey, finding his left flank secure, marched, with nearly the whole of the left wing, to the assistance of the centre, which, notwithstanding the unexpected resistance of colonel Musgrave, was excessively hard pressed in Germantown, where the Americans gained ground incessantly. The battle was now very warm at that village, the attack and the defence being equally vigorous.



The issue appeared for some time dubious. General Agnew was mortally wounded, while charging with great bravery, at the head of the fourth brigade. The American colonel Matthews, of the column of Greene, assailed the English with so much fury that he drove them before him into the town. He had taken a large number of prisoners, and was about entering the village, when he perceived that a thick fog and the unevenness of the ground had caused him to lose sight of the rest of his division. Being soon enveloped by the extremity of the right wing, which fell back upon him when it had discovered that nothing was to be apprehended from the tardy approach of the militia of Maryland and Jersey, he was compelled to surrender with all his party: the English had already rescued their prisoners. This check was the cause that two regiments of the English right wing were enabled to throw themselves into Germantown, and to attack the Americans who had entered it in flank. Unable to sustain the shock, they retired precipitately, leaving a great number of killed and wounded. Lieutenant colonel Musgrave, to whom belongs the principal honour of this affair, was then relieved from all peril. General Grey, being absolute master of Germantown, flew to the succour of the right wing, which was engaged with the left of the column of Greene. The Americans then took to flight, abandoning to the English throughout the line, a victory of which, in the commencement of the action, they had felt assured.

The principal causes of the failure of this well concerted enterprise, were the extreme haziness of the weather; which was so thick, that the Americans

could neither discover the situation nor movements of the British army, nor yet those of their own: the inequality of the ground, which incessantly broke the ranks of their battalions; an inconvenience more serious and difficult to be repaired for new and inexperienced troops, as were most of the Americans, than for the English veterans; and, finally, the unexpected resistance of Musgrave, who found means, in a critical moment, to transform a mere house into an impregnable fortress.

Thus fortune, who at first had appeared disposed to favour one party, suddenly declared herself on the side of their adversaries. Lord Cornwallis, being at Philadelphia, upon intelligence of the attack upon the camp, flew to its succour with a corps of cavalry and the grenadiers; but when he reached the field of battle, the Americans had already left it. They had two hundred men killed in this action; the number of wounded amounted to six hundred; and about four hundred were made prisoners. One of their most lamented losses was that of general Nash, of North Carolina. The loss of the British was little over five hundred in killed and wounded: among the former were brigadier general Agnew, an officer of rare merit, and colonel Bird. The American army saved all its artillery, and retreated the same day about twenty miles, to Perkiomy Creek.

The Congress expressed in decided terms their approbation, both of the plan of this enterprise and the courage with which it was executed; for which their thanks were given to the general and the army. General Stephens, however, was cashiered for misconduct on the retreat.

A few days after the battle, the royal army removed from Germantown to Philadelphia. The want of provisions would not have permitted Howe to follow the enemy into his fastnesses, and he was desirous of co-operating with the naval force in opening the navigation of the Delaware. Washington, having received a small re-enforcement of fifteen hundred militia, and a state regiment from Virginia, again advanced a few miles towards the English, and encamped once more at Skippach Creek. Thus, the British general might have seen that he had to grapple with an adversary, who, far from allowing himself to be discouraged by adverse fortune, seemed, on the contrary, to gain by it more formidable energies; who, the moment after defeat, was prepared to resume the offensive; and whose firmness and activity were such, that even the victories obtained by his adversaries only yielded them the effects of defeat. Nor was the taking of Philadelphia attended with those advantages which were expected from it.

The inhabitants of the country were not in the least intimidated by that event; and the victorious army, surrounded on all sides by enemies, found itself, as it were, immured within the precincts of the city. Washington, posted on the heights of the Schuylkill, maintained a menacing attitude: he employed his cavalry and light troops in scouring the country between the banks of that river and those of the Delaware. He thus repressed the excursions of the English, prevented them from foraging with safety, and deterred the disaffected or the avaricious among the people of the country from conveying provisions to their camp. Moreover, the Congress passed

a resolution, subjecting to martial law and to death all those who should furnish the royal troops with provisions, or any other aids whatsoever.

Compelled to relinquish the hope of supporting his army from the adjacent country, the British general now applied himself with diligence to the task of removing the obstructions of the Delaware, and opening a free communication with the fleet. The enterprise presented difficulties and dangers of no ordinary magnitude. To succeed in this operation, it was necessary to seize Mud-Island, which was defended by Fort Mifflin, and the Point of Red-Bank, where the Americans had erected Fort Mercer. After the reduction of these two fortresses, the upper chevaux-de-frize might be destroyed.

General Howe, therefore, resolved to attack them both at the same time, in concert with those ships which had been able to pass the lower barrier. Batteries of heavy artillery had been erected on the Pennsylvania side, in front of Mud-Island, to assist in dislodging the enemy from that position. The garrison of Fort Mifflin was commanded by colonel Smith, and that of Fort Mercer by colonel Greene, both officers in great esteem among the Americans.

General Howe had arranged for the attack of Fort Mifflin, that while the batteries on the western shore should open their fire upon its right flank, the Vigilant ship of war, passing up the narrow channel which separates Hog-Island from the Pennsylvania shore, should cannonade it in the rear, and the frigates, with the ships Isis and Augusta in front, approaching it by the middle channel, which is considerably wider and deeper. As to Fort Mercer, it was



also to be attacked in the rear, on the side of New Jersey, by landing troops on the left bank of the Delaware.

According to these dispositions, the English put themselves in motion on the evening of the twenty-first of October. Colonel Donop, a German officer, who had distinguished himself in the course of this campaign, passed the Delaware from Philadelphia, with a strong detachment of Hessians, at Coopers-Ferry. Then marching down upon the Jersey shore, along the bank of the river, he arrived at a late hour the following day, in the rear of Red-Bank. The fortifications consisted of extensive outer-works, within which was a strong palisaded intrenchment, well furnished with artillery. Donop attacked the fort with the utmost gallantry. The Americans, after a slight resistance in the outer intrenchment, finding their number too small to man it sufficiently, withdrew into the body of the redoubt, where they made a vigorous defence.

Their intrepidity and the want of scaling ladders baffled all the efforts of the Hessians. Colonel Donop was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. Several of his best officers were killed or disabled; colonel Mingerode himself, the second in command, received a dangerous wound. The Hessians were then severely repulsed; and lieutenant colonel Linsing drew them off with precipitation; but even in their retreat they suffered extremely by the fire of the enemy's galleys and floating batteries. The loss of the Hessians was estimated at not less than four or five hundred men. Donop expired of his wounds the next day. The Americans owed much of their suc-

cess to the Chevalier du Plessis, a French officer, who directed the artillery with great ability and valour. The vanquished returned to Philadelphia.

Meanwhile the ships had advanced, in order to be in readiness to attack Mud-Island. After having made their way with difficulty through the lower barrier, the *Augusta* man of war, several frigates and other smaller vessels, waited above it for the tide: the moment the flood set in, they proceeded towards their destined stations. But a strong northerly wind prevented the *Vigilant* from taking the post assigned her between Hog-Island and the Pennsylvania shore. Moreover, the obstructions which the Americans had sunk in the bed of the river, had, in some degree, altered its natural channel. By this means the *Augusta* and *Merlin* were grounded so fast, at some distance from the *chevaux-de-frize*, that there was no possibility of getting them off. The frigates, however, reached their stations and commenced a cannonade upon Fort Mifflin, while the batteries on shore were also opened upon the garrison. The Americans defended themselves with spirit, and night soon put an end to the engagement. Early next morning the English renewed the attack, not that in the present state of things they expected to reduce the fort, but in the hope that, under cover of their fire, the two ships which were grounded might be got off. Notwithstanding their efforts, the *Augusta* took fire and blew up: the *Merlin*, which could not be removed, was hastily evacuated and laid in a train of destruction. The frigates, despairing of success, and fearing the effect of the explosion, retired with the utmost expedition. The Congress voted their thanks and a

sword to colonels Greene and Smith, for having so gallantly defended the two forts.

The ill success of these two attacks did not, however, discourage the British commanders; and such was the importance of opening the navigation of the Delaware, as well to secure the arrival of stores and supplies as to obtain a free communication with the fleet, that they resolved to leave no means unessayed for the attainment of this object.

Fort Mifflin was placed at the lower end of Mud-Island, having its principal fortifications in front, for the purpose of repelling ships coming up the river. At the opposite extremity, no attack being expected, as the naval means of the British in Philadelphia were too feeble to excite alarm, the fort was surrounded only by a wet ditch. This part, however, was flanked by a block house at each of its angles, one of which had been much damaged in the late attack. A little above Mud Island is another small morassy island called *Province Island*: this the English had occupied in order to be able to batter Fort Mifflin in its rear, and weakest part. They were incessantly employed in conveying thither heavy artillery, provisions and stores, by a difficult channel, near the west bank of the river, behind Hog-Island. They also erected fortifications, in the most suitable places. The Americans perceived distinctly that when the enemy should have completed his works in this island, their position in Mud-Island would no longer be tenable.

Washington would have desired, by a sudden expedition, to dislodge the English from Province Island, but as Howe had thrown a bridge over the Schuylkill,

he might, while the Americans were attempting this stroke, have fallen upon their rear and cut off their retreat. If the American general marched with all his army to cover it, he exposed himself to a general battle, which he wished to avoid. It appeared to him imprudent, to put so much at hazard, after the late unfortunate actions. He felt the greater repugnance to embrace adventurous counsels, as he was already apprized of the successes obtained by the northern army; in consequence of which, a great part of the troops employed against Burgoyne, might be drawn to re-enforce his own. He abstained, therefore, from undertaking the enterprise against Province-Island, hoping however that the courage of the defenders of Fort Mifflin, and the succours that might be sent them secretly, would suffice to prolong their resistance.

But every thing being prepared on the side of the English, they executed their attack the fifteenth of November. All the ships being arrived at their posts, opened a furious cannonade. The Americans answered it, at first, with no less vigour from the fort, from the batteries of New Jersey, and from the galleys which were stationed near that shore. But at length, the works being battered down and the ditches filled up with their ruins, their situation became critical.

They perceived the English were taking measures for storming the body of the fortress the following morning, and being sensible that, in the present state of things, it was not defensible, having sent off their stores, they set fire to every thing that was capable of receiving it, and evacuated the place in the night.



They withdrew to Red-Bank. The next day the English took possession of the fort.

It still remained to dislodge the soldiers of Congress from Red-Bank, before the obstructions of the Delaware could be entirely removed. This operation was of absolute necessity; for, although some vessels of easy burden, being loaded with provisions from the country about Chester, where the inhabitants were well affected to the royal cause, brought scanty supplies to Philadelphia, yet the scarcity in that city became daily more distressing; and firewood was almost totally wanting.

In consequence of these considerations, general Howe having covered Philadelphia by intrenchments, extending from the Delaware to the Schuylkill, and having received some re-enforcements from New York, sent Cornwallis with a strong detachment to the Jersey shore, with instructions to collect provisions, and attack Fort Mercer in the rear. That general, having crossed from Chester to Billings-Point, prepared to execute the orders he had received. He was there joined by a body of forces just arrived from New York. Washington, upon intelligence of this movement, being earnestly desirous to preserve, if practicable, a position so capable of arresting the progress of the enemy, had ordered major general Greene, an officer he much esteemed for his talents and intrepidity, to pass, also, at the head of a strong detachment into New Jersey. A hope was entertained that he would be able, not only to protect Fort Mercer, but to obtain some decisive advantage over Lord Cornwallis; as the situation of the fort, which the British general could only invest by placing him-

self between Timber and Manto Creeks, neither of them fordable for a great distance from the Delaware, would expose the assailants to great peril from a respectable force in their rear. General Greene passed the Delaware, and landed at Burlington. He was accompanied by the Marquis de la Fayette, who was eager to enter the field again, though not yet well cured of his wound.

This division was to be re-enforced by the troops expected from the banks of the Hudson. The march was commenced; but general Greene being informed that Cornwallis was become greatly superior to him in number, by the junction of the re-enforcement from New York, abandoned the plan of giving him battle. Hence colonel Greene, who commanded the garrison, losing all hope of succour, and apprized of the approach of Cornwallis, evacuated Fort Mercer and Red-Bank, leaving his artillery, with a considerable quantity of cannon-ball and stores in the power of the royalists. The English dismantled the fort and demolished all the works.

The American shipping having now lost all protection on either side of the river, several gallies and other armed vessels took the advantage of a favourable night to pass the batteries of Philadelphia, and escape to places of security further up. The English, on perceiving this transaction, sent an officer with a party of seamen to man the Delaware frigate, and took such other measures as rendered the escaping of the remainder impracticable. Thus environed, the crews abandoned and set fire to their vessels, which were all consumed, to the amount of seventeen, of different sorts, including two floating batteries and four fire-

ships. The English having secured, as we have seen, the command of the river, laboured to clear it of all the impediments with which the Americans had obstructed its channel. But the difficulties they had to surmount were extreme, and the season was far advanced, it being already the last of November. With all these efforts they could only obtain such an opening through the upper barrier as admitted vessels of easy burthen. These were accordingly employed for the transport of provisions and stores to Philadelphia. Although the royalists had thus partly succeeded in re-establishing the navigation of the Delaware, the resistance of the republicans had been so strenuous and so long, that general Howe could find no opportunity for attacking the army of Washington before it was re-enforced by the victorious troops of the Hudson. Acting always with prudence, the British general would never expose himself to the hazard of a battle until he was sure of being able to communicate freely with the fleet of the admiral, his brother, as well on account of supplies, as for the security of retreat in case of misfortune. General Greene had remained in New Jersey. He had already been joined by several corps sent by general Gates to the assistance of the army of Pennsylvania; among them was that of Morgan's riflemen, become celebrated by a multitude of brilliant exploits. Washington was not without hopes that Greene would find occasion to gain some advantage that might counterbalance the losses, which it had been impossible to avoid. But Cornwallis had so fortified himself on Gloucester-Point, that he was perfectly secure from any enterprise on the part of general Greene.

Washington then became apprehensive that the British general, having accomplished all the objects of his expedition into New Jersey, by the reduction of Fort Mercer, the junction with his re-enforcements, and the expediting of a great quantity of provisions to Philadelphia, might suddenly recross the Delaware, and thus enable Howe, with all his forces, to attack the American army while divided. Greene was therefore ordered to repass the river immediately, and join the principal army at Skippach-Creek. Similar considerations determined general Howe to direct the detachment of Cornwallis to rejoin him without delay. Before, however, the two parties evacuated New Jersey, Morgan's rifle corps and some detachments of militia, commanded by the Marquis de la Fayette, gallantly attacked and routed a body of Hessians and English grenadiers. After this affair, the Marquis, who had till then served as a volunteer, was invested by Congress with the command of a division of the army.

Washington had at length been re-enforced by the troops which Gates had sent him; their march had experienced difficulties and frequent delays. Gates himself had shown much repugnance to put them in motion; and, besides, they had manifested a mutinous spirit towards their chiefs, declaring that they would not march without money and without clothing. Their officers, however, finally succeeded in persuading them to proceed. This aid was composed of four thousand men of approved courage and flushed with recent victory; but squalid in their appearance, from fatigues and want of necessaries. After the junction of these troops, Washington advanced



within fourteen miles of Philadelphia, to a place called White-Marsh, where he encamped in a very strong position, with his right to the Wissahickon creek, and the front partly covered by Sandy-Run. At this time the American army consisted of twelve thousand regulars and something over, with about three thousand militia. Howe had with him but little more than twelve thousand fighting men.

He was ardently desirous, however, of giving battle. Hoping that the late re-enforcement would animate his adversary with the same desire, he marched on the fourth of December towards the enemy, fully determined to make another trial of the fortune of arms. He took post on Chestnut-Hill, in the front of the enemy's right, at only three miles' distance. Some skirmishes happened, in which the royalists generally had the advantage. But Howe, finding that the right of the enemy afforded no opening for an attack, changed his ground before day on the seventh, and took a new position opposite to their centre and left, not more than a mile from their lines. He continued to extend upon the enemy's left, as if his intention was to turn it, and attack in the rear. Washington did not shun the battle, but chose to receive it in his lines. According to his invariable plan, he thought, first of all, of the preservation of the army, on which depended the fate of all America. At length, the British general, finding that nothing could provoke or entice him into the field, and that his camp was in every part inaccessible, after a variety of fruitless manœuvres, returned to Philadelphia. The British army suffered greatly in these marches and counter-marches from the severity of the weather, both officers and

soldiers being totally destitute of tents and field equipage: this, added to the fatigues of war, had reduced them to a deplorable condition. Upon this account, and considering the steadiness of the enemy in declining to fight without every probability of success, general Howe determined to place his troops in winter quarters at Philadelphia; having first, however, sent out a strong detachment of cavalry, under Lord Cornwallis, to make a general forage on the western side of the Schuylkill. Washington, in like manner, resolved to give his troops winter lodgings; but he was undecided where to choose them. He was not willing to leave the country exposed to the depredations of the enemy, and yet he wished to avoid extending his quarters too much, lest they should be forced at different points by sudden attacks.

On the west side of the Schuylkill, about twenty miles from Philadelphia, is a deep and rugged hollow, called *Valley-Forge*. Upon the mountainous flanks of this valley, and upon a vast plain which overlooks it, as well as all the adjacent country, Washington finally concluded to establish his army for the winter.

His soldiers were too ill clothed to admit of their being exposed to the inclemency of that season under mere tents; it was therefore decided that a sufficient number of huts should be erected, to be made of logs and filled in with mortar, in which they would find a more effectual shelter. The whole army began its march towards Valley-Forge: some soldiers were seen to drop dead with cold; others, without shoes, had their feet cut by the ice, and left their tracks in blood. After the most painful efforts, the troops at length reached their destined quarters. They im-

mediately set about constructing their habitations, which they erected upon the plan of a regular city. All was movement: some cut down trees, others fashioned them; in a short time all the barracks were completed, and the soldiers comfortably lodged. After a severe and sanguinary campaign of four months, the two armies appeared thus to enjoy some repose, sufficiently protected from the rigours of the season. The British general had derived no other fruit from all his victories, and from all his manœuvres, than simply that of having procured excellent winter quarters for his army.

1778. In this alternation of good and ill success, passed the year 1777 for the two belligerent parties in America. If the Americans, in the war of Canada and upon the banks of the Hudson, gave brilliant proofs of no common valour: if, in their campaign of Pennsylvania, they bore their reverses with an heroic firmness, they exhibited in their quarters of Valley-Forge such examples of constancy and resignation, as we should not dare to pronounce ever to have been equalled by other nations, in any age or in any country. They had not only to endure the extreme inclemency of the season, but the most distressing destitution of things the most necessary to life. These sufferings of the army originated from several causes, such as the pressure of circumstances, the avarice of the contractors or purchasing commissaries, the adverse dispositions of the inhabitants, and, finally, the little experience of Congress itself in affairs relating to public administration, especially in the military department.

Scarcely were the troops established in their encampment of Valley-Forge, when Howe, having sent a strong detachment to forage in the islands of the Delaware, and the country about Derby, Washington, in order to oppose it, was inclined to march a considerable part of his army towards that point. But on viewing the state of the magazines, it was discovered with surprise and alarm, that they contained no more than one day's provision.

In such pressing danger of a total famine, and the entire dissolution of the army, it became necessary not only to relinquish the design of marching against the English, but instantly to detach parties different ways to seize, as in an enemy's country, the provision requisite to satisfy the present wants of the army. Washington was authorized to take this measure by the urgency of the conjuncture, and by the decree of Congress, which conferred upon him dictatorial powers. The foragers executed their commissions, and by incredible exertions, and not without exciting the greatest discontent among the country people, victualled the camp for a few days; but soon the same distress was felt anew, and the same resource could not the second time afford relief. Whatever efforts were made, little could be gleaned, as well because the adjacent country was already nearly exhausted, as because the inhabitants were careful to conceal in the woods and swamps, their cattle and other articles, liable to be taken for the use of the army: they acted thus either from contrariety of opinion, or from love of gain. They preferred to encounter all the perils of carrying their supplies to Philadelphia, where they



were paid for them in ready money, to reserving them for the use of their own soldiers, because, in the latter case, they only received certificates to be discharged at some future time. They much doubted whether they would ever be liquidated, so great was their want of confidence in the stability of the government, and they were not ignorant that some of these bills had been refused payment when fully due.

The commander-in-chief had not neglected to write, in the most pressing terms, to the governors of New England, requesting them to send forward subsistence for the army with all possible expedition, and especially supplies of cattle, which abound in those provinces. The purchasing commissaries had repaired thither, and contracted, particularly in Connecticut, for immense quantities of provisions, well knowing the impossibility of subsisting an army, for any length of time, by compulsory requisitions. But these means were slow in operating the desired relief; and a false measure of Congress had nearly frustrated the effect which was expected from the contracts. The victories of Howe, and the gloomy aspect of affairs in Pennsylvania, and perhaps more than all, the enormous issues of bills of credit, which the Congress, controlled by a fatal necessity, were continually making, had occasioned these bills to fall at that epoch to one-fourth of their nominal value, so that one hundred dollars in paper would command no more than twenty-five dollars in specie. The price of articles of the first necessity had advanced nearly in proportion, and the commissaries, in order to conclude their bargains, had been obliged to conform to the current rates. The Congress disapproved

of their doings, attributing to the avarice of the citizens what was really the effect of the public distress. Accordingly, they either annulled the contracts or postponed the execution of them. Not satisfied with this, they passed a resolution which could not appear to have been dictated by an indispensable necessity, since, from its very nature, it could never be carried into effect. They invited the different states of the Union to determine, and establish by express laws, not only the price of labour, but also that of all articles of common use in human life. The several states complied with the recommendation of Congress, and appraised things by law. The result was, that the citizens secreted their effects, and buyers could find nothing they wanted, either in the public markets or elsewhere.

Famine began to prevail in the camp of Valley-Forge: already the most alarming consequences were apprehended. Notwithstanding their admirable patience, the soldiers murmured, and a mutiny appeared inevitable. The Congress, at length constrained by the force of things, retraced their steps, and recommended to the several state legislatures the repeal of all laws on the subject of prices.

The contracts of the purchasing commissaries were allowed to take effect. But the difficulty of procuring a sufficient number of wheel carriages still delayed the arrival of the convoys. Washington, to prevent the total dissolution of his army, ordered a general forage in the neighbourhood of the camp, under the direction of general Greene. Captains Lee and Mac Lane, officers no less sagacious than active, were charged with a similar commission in the states

of Maryland and Delaware; and colonel Tilghman in New Jersey. Each of these executed the orders of the commander-in-chief with equal zeal and effect; they penetrated into the most retired places of concealment, where they found grain and cattle in abundance. Captains Mac Lane and Lee, in particular, discovered large droves in the marshy meadows on the Delaware, ready to be expedited for Philadelphia, which they soon caused to take the direction of Valley-Forge. Thus the camp found itself again victualled for the present. It may perhaps appear unaccountable, that the American government should not seasonably have employed those means which might have prevented so urgent a peril. It is, however, certain, that soon after the commencement of hostilities, the Congress had appointed colonel Trumbull, a man of excellent abilities, and a zealous patriot, to superintend the purchasing of necessaries for the troops. But from his want of experience, and perhaps of sufficient support on the part of the government, as yet not well consolidated, it had resulted, that the army was often on the point of suffering from the deficiency of supplies; hence the plans of the commander-in-chief were frequently frustrated, and the movements of his army embarrassed, to the loss of many fair opportunities for the most important strokes.

When afterwards, about the middle of the year 1777, the department of colonel Trumbull began to be administered with more regularity, the Congress, believing that the more officers of supply they had under their control, the better the troops would be served, created two commissaries-general, the one of purchases and the other of issues. They determined that each

of these commissaries-general should have four deputies, to be appointed by Congress, not removable by the head of the department, and accountable to themselves only.

They afterwards resolved that the quarter-master-general's department should be executed on the following plan:

"First, The military line, to be styled the quarter-master-general's, is to include the regulating of marches, encampments and order of battle. Second, the commissary of forage. Third, the commissary of horses and wagons. Fourth, the agent for the purchase of tents, intrenching tools, building of barracks, and for all the smaller supplies of the department." Colonel Trumbull, dissatisfied with this multiplicity of departments, and still more with this independence of the deputies with respect to the head of the department, requested the Congress to appoint him a successor. The Congress persisted in their plan. The old order of things being thus annihilated, and the new not yet organized, there followed those serious inconveniences which we have mentioned above.

Congress at length perceived the inevitable preponderancy in times of war, and especially, in new states, of military men and affairs over civil; they saw there was no possibility of inducing the generals, who all disapproved it, to execute their plan for the administration of the army. It was accordingly abandoned, and general Greene, who enjoyed the entire confidence of the commander-in-chief, was appointed quarter-master-general, and a very suitable person named Wadsworth, commissary-general of purchases; both having power to appoint and remove their as-



sistants. But these measures were not adopted till very late; and before the salutary effects of the new system could be felt, the army was a prey to such mischiefs and miseries, as brought the republic to the very brink of destruction. The distresses of the troops were far from being confined to dearth of sustenance; the greatest scarcity, or rather a total want of all other necessities was also experienced in the camp. It was utterly unprovided even of clothing, an article so essential to the health, as well as to the spirits of the soldiers; tattered and half naked, they would sooner have been taken for so many mendicants, than defenders of a generous country.

Some few had one shirt, but many only the moiety of one, and the greater part none at all. Many, for want of shoes, walked barefoot on the frozen ground. Few, if any, had blankets for the night. Great numbers sickened: others, unfitted for service by the cold and their nakedness, were excused by their officers from all military duty, and either remained in their barracks, or were lodged in the houses of the neighbouring farmers. Near three thousand men were thus rendered incapable of bearing arms. Congress had neglected no care to provide a remedy for so alarming an evil. They had authorized the commander-in-chief, as we have already said, to seize, wherever he might be, and from any person whatever, all articles of necessity for the army; and nothing could be more essential than to clothe it. But Washington felt great repugnance to using this power; as, on the one hand, it exasperated the citizens, and, on the other, it accustomed the soldiers to lay hands on the property of others. The Congress considered

these scruples unseasonable; they recommended to the legislatures of each state to enact laws, appointing suitable persons to seize and take for the use of the army, all articles proper for the clothing of soldiers, on condition, however, of paying the proprietors for the articles so taken, at a rate to be fixed by the convention of the committees appointed for this purpose by the several states.

They also created a commissary-general of clothing for the troops, to be assisted by a deputy commissary in each state, as well for the purpose of superintending the compulsory requisitions, as in order, if practicable, to procure all that was necessary by way of contracts. But these measures were slow in producing the desired effect. Many detested the thought of wresting from their fellow citizens what they would not sell voluntarily. There prevailed, besides, at this time, in all the states, a scarcity of cloths, linens, leather, and generally of all the articles that were most wanted. Nevertheless, the deputy commissary of the clothing department in Massachusetts, had succeeded in concluding contracts with several merchants for large quantities of merchandise, at the rate of ten to eighteen per cent. above the current price. These terms appeared exorbitant to some, and even to the Congress, and much was said about the avarice of the merchants. It was however just to consider, that the bills they received in payment were already fallen to one-fourth of their nominal value; that the merchandise in question was extremely scarce in the country; that the price of labour was greatly advanced, and that it was become extremely difficult to make remittance to foreign countries.

Whether it was that these murmurs had piqued the merchants, or that cupidity had really more power over them than the promises of the government, several of those who had entered into contracts refused to furnish, unless they were paid in advance. The Congress, being informed of this determination, addressed a letter to the state government, requesting that the goods should be seized from such as refused to fulfil their contracts, at prices to be fixed by commissioners appointed for that purpose under the state authority. These resolutions of Congress, and the letters written to the states by Washington, urging them in the most earnest language to come to the succour of his suffering army, at length produced all the effect that was desired; yet not so promptly, however, but that the greater part of the winter was already elapsed when the first convoys of clothing arrived at the camp.

To all the miseries of the army already enumerated, must still be added the want of straw. The soldiers, overwhelmed with lassitude, enfeebled by hunger, and benumbed with cold in their service by day and by night, had no other bed in their huts except the bare and humid ground. This cause, joined to the others that have been related, propagated diseases: the hospitals were as rapidly replenished as death evacuated them; their administration was no less defective in its organization than that of the camp. The unsuitableness of the buildings in which they had been established, the excessive penury of every kind of furniture, and the multitude of sick that crowded them, had generated an insupportable fœtor. The hospital fever broke out in them, and daily swept

off the most robust as well as the feeble. It was not possible to remedy it by often changing the linen, for of this they were utterly unprovided; nor by a more salubrious diet, when the coarsest was scarcely attainable; nor even by medicines, which were either absolutely wanting, or of the worst quality, and adulterated through the cupidity of the contractors: For such, in general, has been the nature of these furnishers of armies, that they should rather be denominated the *artisans of scarcity*; they have always preferred money to the life of the soldier. Hence it was, that the American hospital resembled more a receptacle for the dying than a refuge for the sick: far from restoring health to the diseased, it more often proved mortal to the well. This pestilential den was the terror of the army. The soldiers preferred perishing with cold in the open air, to being buried alive in the midst of the dead. Whether it was the effect of inevitable necessity, or of the avarice of men, it is but too certain, that an untimely death carried off a multitude of brave soldiers, who, with better attentions, might have been preserved for the defence of their country in its distress.

All these disorders, so pernicious to the republic, took their origin in the causes we have related, and partly also in the military organization itself. The chiefs appeared to acknowledge no system, and the subalterns no restraint of obedience. Horses were allowed to perish in the high-ways, or to escape into the fields, without search. The roads were incumbered with carts belonging to the army, and unfit for service. Hence it happened, that when the incredible exertions of the government and of good citizens had



succeeded in collecting provisions for the army, they could not be conveyed to the camp, and, by long delays, they were again dispersed, or wasted. This defect of carriages was equally prejudicial to the transportation of arms and military stores, which were, in consequence, abandoned to the discretion of those who either plundered them, or suffered them to be plundered. An incalculable quantity of public effects was thus dissipated or destroyed. In the camp of Valley-Forge, men were constrained to perform, as they really did, with inconceivable patience, the service of beasts of draught, as well in procuring firewood as in drawing the artillery. And certainly, nothing could be imagined to equal the sufferings which the American army had to undergo in the course of this winter, except the almost super-human firmness with which they bore them. Not but that a certain number, seduced by the royalists, deserted their colours, and slunk off to the British army in Philadelphia; but these were mostly Europeans, who had entered the continental service. The true-born Americans, supported by their patriotism, as by their love and veneration for the commander-in-chief, manifested an unshaken perseverance: they chose rather to suffer all the extremes of famine and of frost, than to violate, in this perilous hour, the faith they had pledged to their country. They were encouraged, it is true, by the example of their generals, who, with an air of serenity, took part in all their fatigues, and shared in all their privations. But can it be dissembled, that if general Howe had seen fit to seize the opportunity, and had suddenly attacked the camp at Valley-Forge, he would inevitably have gained a complete victory?

Without military stores and without provisions, how could the Americans have defended their intrenchments? Besides, to enter the field anew, in the midst of so rigorous a season, was become for them an absolute impossibility. On the first of February, four thousand of their men were incapable of any kind of service, for want of clothing. The condition of the rest was very little better. In a word, out of the seventeen thousand men that were in camp, it would have been difficult to muster five thousand fit for service.

We pretend not to decide what were the motives of the British general for not taking advantage of a conjuncture so favourable. It appears to us, at least, that the extreme regard he had to the preservation of his troops, did but lead him on this occasion to reserve them for greater perils; and his circumspection rather deserves the appellation of timidity than of prudence.

Washington was filled with anguish at the calamities of his army. But nothing gave him more pain than to see his soldiers exposed to the most pernicious example: the officers openly declared the design of resigning their commissions; many of them had already left the army, and returned to their families. This determination was principally owing to the depreciation of paper money: it was become so considerable, and the price of all articles of consumption, as well for this reason as from the difficulties of commerce, was so prodigiously advanced that the officers, far from being able to live as it became their rank, had not even the means of providing for their subsistence. Some had already exhausted their pri-

vate resources to maintain a decent appearance, and others, destitute of patrimonial fortune, had been forced to contract debts, or restrict themselves to a parsimony little worthy of the rank with which they were invested. Hence a disinclination for the service became almost universal. Nor should it be supposed that only the less deserving or worthless desired to resign; for the regiments being incomplete, and the number of officers too great, their retreat would not have been an evil; but it was especially the bravest, the most distinguished, the most spirited, who, disdaining more than others the state of degradation to which they were reduced, were fully resolved to quit the army, in order to escape from it. Alarmed at the progress of the evil, Washington endeavoured to resist it by the use of those remedies which he believed the most suitable: he spared neither promises nor encouragements; he wrote the most pressing letters to the Congress that they might seriously consider the subject, and take the proper measures thereon. He exhorted them especially, to secure half pay to the officers after the war, either for life or for a definite term. He observed that it was easy to talk of patriotism, and to cite a few examples from ancient history of great enterprises carried by this alone to a successful conclusion; but that those who relied solely upon individual sacrifices for the support of a long and sanguinary war, must not expect to enjoy their illusion long; that it was necessary to take the passions of men as they are, and not as it might be wished to find them; that the love of country had indeed operated great things in the commencement of the present revolution; but that to continue and complete it, required also the incentive

of interest and the hope of reward. The Congress manifested at first very little inclination to adopt the propositions of the commander-in-chief, either because they deemed them too extraordinary, or from reluctance to load the state with so heavy a burden, or, finally, because they thought the grants of lands to the officers and soldiers, of which we have made mention in its place, ought to satisfy the wishes of men possessed of any moderation. But at length, submitting to necessity, they decreed an allowance of half pay for life to the officers of the army, with the reservation, however, to the government of the power to commute it, if deemed expedient, for the sum of six years' half pay. A short time after they passed another resolution, which restricted the allowance of half pay to seven years, dating from the end of the war. These measures, though salutary, were not taken till too late, and, moreover, were not sufficiently spontaneous on the part of the government. Already more than two hundred officers of real merit had given up their commissions; and it was again exemplified on this occasion, that a benefit long delayed loses much of its value. Nor should the Congress have forgotten, that the founders of a new state control not, but are controlled by, soldiers; and that since their support is so indispensable, and it is impossible to resist them, the wiser course is to content them.

In the midst of his anxieties, created by the causes we have mentioned, Washington had the additional chagrin of finding that certain intrigues were in agitation against himself. The impatient, who would have events to succeed each other with the same rapidity as their own desires, and the ambitious, who,



to raise themselves, are always ready to impute to others the strokes of fortune, or the effects of necessity, gave out on all occasions, and even published in the gazettes, that the reverses of the two preceding years, in New Jersey and in Pennsylvania, were more owing to the incapacity of the commander-in-chief than to any other cause. They enlarged upon the victories of Gates, whom they placed far above Washington, and were continually extolling the heroic valour of the Americans, which rendered them capable of the most splendid achievements, when they were led to battle by an able commander. Nor was it merely among private persons that these slanders were circulated; discontent caused them to be repeated by men in office, gave them admittance into several of the state legislatures, into the midst of the army, and finally, even into the Congress itself. It appeared, that the object of these machinations was to give Washington so many disgusts that he should of himself retire from the head of the army, and thus make room for the immediate promotion of Gates to that exalted station. Whether this general himself had any hand in the intrigue, is a matter of uncertainty. If the rectitude and acknowledged generosity of his character be considered, it will appear more probable that he had not. But ambition is a passion of inconceivable subtilty, which insinuates itself under the appearances of virtue, and too often corrupts and sullies the most ingenuous minds. It is certain that Gates was not ignorant of the object of the combination, and that he threw no difficulties in the way. Perhaps he entertained the opinion, and the authors of these machinations with him, that

Washington was not able to sustain so great a weight, and intended, by giving him a successor, to save the country. As for us, that respect for truth which ought to be our only guide, compels us to declare that the leaders of this combination, very little concerned for the public good, were immoderately so for their own, and that the aim of all their efforts was, to advance themselves and their friends at the expense of others. Among them, and of the first rank, was general Conway, one of the most wily and restless intriguers, that passed in those times from Europe into America. Declaiming and vociferating, incessantly besieging all the members of Congress with his complaints, he pretended that there existed no sort of discipline in the American army, that there was no two regiments which manœuvred alike, and not two officers in any regiment who could execute or command the military exercises; in a word, he had said and done so much, that the Congress appointed him inspector and major-general. This appointment excited loud murmurs in the camp, and the brigadier generals remonstrated. But this man, bent on attaining his purposes, and whose audacity knew no bounds, openly spake of the commander-in-chief in the most derogatory terms: and, as it always happens in times of adversity, he readily found those who believed him.

The assembly of Pennsylvania was the first to break the ice; on the report that Washington was moving into winter quarters, they addressed a remonstrance to Congress, severely censuring this measure of the commander-in-chief, and expressing, in very plain words, their dissatisfaction at the mode in which

he had conducted the war. The 'Pennsylvanians were excessively chagrined at the loss of their capital, forgetful of their own backwardness in strengthening the army which had twice fought superior numbers in their defence. It was, moreover, believed, at the time, that the members of Congress from Massachusetts, and particularly Samuel Adams, had never been able to brook that the supreme command of all the armies should have been conferred upon a Virginian, to the exclusion of the generals of their province, who then enjoyed a reputation not inferior, and perhaps superior to that of Washington. It appeared also that these delegates, being the most zealous partisans of the revolution, were far from approving the moderation of the commander-in-chief. They would have preferred placing at the head of affairs a more ardent and decided republican; and it is asserted that they were on the point of demanding an inquiry into the causes of the unsuccessful issue of the campaigns of the years 1776 and 1777.

This had not effect. But a board of war was created, under the direction of generals Gates and Mifflin, both of whom, if they were not, were thought to be, among the authors of these machinations against Washington. Anonymous letters were circulated, in which he was cruelly lacerated; they made him responsible as well for the disastrous campaigns of Jersey and Pennsylvania, as for the deplorable condition to which the troops were reduced in their winter quarters. One of these letters was addressed to Laurens, the president of Congress; it was filled with heavy accusations against the commander-in-chief: Another, similar, was sent to Henry, the gover-

nor of Virginia: both transmitted them to Washington. Supported by that elevated spirit, and by that firmness which no reverses of fortune could abate, the serenity he enjoyed was not even for a moment interrupted. He received with the same temper another determination of Congress, matured in concert with the new board of war, perhaps to let it be seen that they knew how to act by themselves, or because they had really withdrawn from the commander-in-chief a great part of the confidence they had placed in him in times past. They had projected a new expedition against Canada. It was proposed to place at the head of this enterprise the Marquis de la Fayette, whose qualifications, as a Frenchman of illustrious rank, promised peculiar advantages for the conquest of a province recently French. But, perhaps also, the authors of this scheme had it principally in view, in separating La Fayette from Washington, to deprive the commander-in-chief of the defence he found in so faithful a friend. He was to have been accompanied by the same Conway mentioned above, and by general Starke. Washington, without having been at all consulted upon this expedition, and even without its being communicated to him, received orders to put Hazen's regiment of Canadians on the march for Albany. He obeyed without delay. The Marquis, on his arrival at Albany, found nothing prepared for the expedition; neither men, nor arms, nor munitions. He complained of it to Congress: the enterprise was relinquished. Washington was authorized to recall the young Frenchman to his camp: as to Conway, he was not invited thither. Soon after, having made himself the object of general animadver-



sion by the arrogance of his manners,' and his intrigues against Washington, he requested and obtained leave to resign. He was succeeded in the office of inspector-general by the Baron Steuben, a Prussian officer of distinguished reputation, who, perfectly versed in the tactics of Frederick II, undertook to teach them to the soldiers of Congress. By his exertions, the Americans learned to manœuvre with uniformity, and their discipline was essentially improved.

It would be impossible to express with what indignation the whole army and the best citizens were filled, on hearing of the machinations that were in agitation against the illustrious chief, who possessed their entire affection. An universal outcry arose against the intriguers. Conway no longer durst show himself among the soldiers, who threatened to wreak their vengeance upon him. He repaired to York, in Pennsylvania, where at that time the Congress resided. As to Samuel Adams, hurried away by the enthusiasm of his patriotic sentiments, he had probably acted from no other motive but the good of the state; even he thought it prudent, however, to keep aloof from the officers and soldiers, under the apprehension of injury from the effects of their fury. If the Congress, yielding to the artifices and importunities of the enemies of Washington, had been induced to take the resolutions we have related, they were nevertheless not ignorant how dangerous, in affairs of state, are changes made without due reflection. They were perfectly aware that France, whose intervention they hoped soon to obtain, would never repose in a man, English born, as was Gates, the unbounded confidence she had already placed in the

American chief. They could not but perceive that, though there might be a warrior possessed of talents equal to those of Washington, there was none who could rival him in fidelity, in rectitude, in goodness, and, still less, in the esteem of the people, and the affection of the soldiers. Upon these considerations, the Congress maintained a firm stand against all intrigues, and manifested no appearance of a disposition to take the supreme command from one who had approved himself so worthy to hold it. Washington was fully apprized of the artifices that were employed to diminish his well-earned reputation; far from allowing them to intimidate him, he did not even appear to notice them. He indulged none of that secret discontent which men of weak minds, or whose hearts are devoured by ambition, are too apt, in similar circumstances, to cherish against their country; his zeal for his duty never experienced the smallest remission. This conjuncture certainly enabled him to exhibit his moderation and his constancy in all their splendour: it proved that he could vanquish himself. He was in the midst of an army dejected by repeated defeats, destitute of every accommodation, and reduced to the verge of famine. Gates, at the same time, shone with all the lustre of recent victory, and all the renown of his ancient exploits. As to Washington, lacerated by the public prints, denounced in anonymous letters, publicly accused by the representation of different provinces, even the Congress seemed ready to abandon him to the fury of his enemies. In the midst of a storm so formidable, he maintained entire not only the stability, but even the calmness of his mind: all devotion to his country,

he seemed to have forgotten himself. The twenty-third of January he wrote from Valley-Forge, that neither interest nor ambition had engaged him in the public service; that he had accepted and not solicited the command; that he had not undertaken it without that distrust of himself, felt by every man not destitute of all knowledge, from the apprehension of not being able to perform worthily the part assigned him; that, as far as his abilities had permitted, he had fulfilled his duty, aiming as invariably at the object proposed, as the magnetic needle points at the pole; that as soon as the nation should no longer desire his services, or another should be found more capable than himself of satisfying its expectations, he should quit the helm, and return to a private station, with as much pleasure as ever the wearied traveller retired to rest; that he wished from the bottom of his heart his successor might experience more propitious gales, and less numerous obstacles; that if his exertions had not answered the expectations of his fellow citizens, no one could lament it more sincerely than himself; but that he thought it proper to add, a day would come, when the interests of America would no longer exact of him an impenetrable mystery; and that until then, he would not be the first to reveal truths which might prejudice his country, whatever wrongs to himself might result from his silence. By the concluding words, he alluded to the insidious proceedings of the ambitious, the shameful malversations of the army contractors, and the peculations or delinquencies of all those by whose fault the army was reduced to such an extremity of distress and calamity.

May this admirable moderation of Washington teach those in elevated stations, that popular rewards and public favour should never be measured by the standard of self-love, and that though the rulers of nations are often ungrateful, men who sincerely love their country, may still find consolations and glory in knowing how to control even a just resentment.

Washington, in the midst of so trying a crisis, not only always kept the mastery of himself, but he often also consulted the Congress upon the military operations he meditated, upon the measures to be taken, in order to fill up the regiments, and, finally, upon all the means of placing the army in a condition to commence the ensuing campaign with the necessary resources.

It was known that the British general expected large re-enforcements from Europe; Washington was desirous of resuming hostilities early, in order to attack him before they arrived. This plan was of extreme importance; he was accordingly indefatigable in urging the Congress and the governments of the several states, by frequent letters, that the preparations for the campaign might experience no delay. All would equally have wished to comply with the desires of the commander-in-chief; but deliberations are taken of necessity but tardily in popular governments.

What ought to have been ready in the beginning of spring, was but scantily forth coming in the course of all the summer. Even the organization of the army was not completed until about the last of May. Until then there was observed an extreme disparity, not only between the regiments of different states,



but even between those of the same state; a confusion productive of singular detriment to the service. But by a decree of the 27th of May, the infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers were organized upon an uniform system in all parts of the army. These delays might have proved essentially prejudicial to the American arms, if unforeseen events had not prevented the British generals from opening the campaign so soon as they would have desired. They contented themselves with detaching their light troops to scour the country in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia and the nearer parts of New Jersey, in order to forage and secure the roads. These excursions produced nothing remarkable, except it be that an English detachment having surprised, in the month of March, a party of Americans at the bridges of Quinton and Hancock, all the soldiers who composed it were barbarously massacred, while crying for quarter. The English, about the same time, undertook an expedition up the Delaware, in order to destroy the magazines at Bordentown, and to take or burn the vessels which the Americans had withdrawn up the river between Philadelphia and Trenton. In both these enterprises they succeeded to their wishes. They attempted, also, to surprise the Marquis de la Fayette, who was encamped at Baron-Hill, on the left bank of the Schuylkill, with a considerable body of troops: but he baffled their enterprise by his activity and judicious dispositions, although in the commencement of the action, general Grant had obtained some advantage over him.

While these events were passing on land, hostilities were also prosecuted upon sea, where the Ame-

ricans daily acquired reputation. They manifested so bold and enterprising a spirit in their maritime expeditions, that the British commerce suffered on their part incredible losses. Since the commencement of the war in 1776, they had already captured upwards of five hundred English vessels, of different sizes, and all with cargoes of great value. Emboldened by their success, even the coasts of Great Britain were not secure from their insults, where they daily took numerous prizes. The royal navy, however, opposed their enterprises, and took many of their ships in the seas of America and of Europe; but the advantage, nevertheless, remained very decidedly with the Americans.

In the meantime, Sir Henry Clinton was arrived at Philadelphia, having been appointed commander-in-chief of all the royal forces, in the place of Sir William Howe, who returned to England. Dissatisfied with the ministers, who had not sent him all the reinforcements he considered necessary to the decision of the war, he had offered his resignation, and the ministers had accepted it with promptitude. They did not forgive him for not having more effectually cooperated with Burgoyne, and for not having displayed all the vigour, in the conduct of the war, which they would have desired. And certainly he rather merits the praise of a prudent than of an adventurous commander. If commendation is due him for the vigour and rare ability he actually displayed in certain expeditions, perhaps he will not escape reprehension for not having undertaken any of greater magnitude and of more importance. In the commencement of the war, when the minds in America were

most inflamed, and the English had not yet collected their troops, or received their re-enforcements, perhaps this circumspection and this dilatory system of war, was well judged; for never should all be committed to fortune with only a partial exertion of force; and the enemy is attacked at the greatest advantage after his ardour has already cooled. But when a great part of the Americans, exhausted by expences, wearied by a long war and by the scarcity of every thing, were become more disposed to return to their former condition, and when the English had received all the re-enforcements they could expect, the British general should have placed all his hopes of victory in the rapidity and terror of his arms. This course seems to have been recommended to him by prudence itself, when it is considered, that besides the probability of victory which a regular battle always offered to the English, the total defeat of the army of Congress involved, if not infallibly, at least in all likelihood, the absolute submission of America, while, on the other hand, the rout of the British army would not have rendered the Americans more inflexible than they were, and moreover, would not in the least have changed the dispositions of the French government, which, since the capitulation of Saratoga, manifestly tended to war. The consequences of a decisive victory were, therefore, more advantageous than those of the most complete discomfiture could have been detrimental. Howe valued himself upon being thought very sparing of the blood of his soldiers, as he could only draw re-enforcements from so great a distance; and, perhaps, he feared that if he lost a pitched battle, the inhabitants might rise in fury and

utterly exterminate the relics of his routed army. But so sanguinary an overthrow was not to be apprehended with such soldiers and with such officers. Besides, in the worst event, he was sure of a retreat on board the fleet, by rallying the troops in a place accessible to it.

On any hypothesis, things were now got to such a head, that it was essential to strike a decisive blow; for, upon the continuance of a war in which France was about to take part, the independence of America could scarcely appear doubtful. However, the truth was, Howe certainly possessed an elevated and generous mind; he had always the desire, though rarely the power, to prevent the atrocities perpetrated by his troops; no curb could restrain the brutal fury of the Germans who followed his standard. Humane towards his soldiers, affable with his officers, a foe to disorder and violence, he was the object of general esteem and affection.

Before his departure, the officers of the army were disposed to give him a brilliant carousal; it consisted in jousts and tournaments, marches, evolutions, triumphal arches and honorary inscriptions. This entertainment, from the variety of ingredients, was called a medley. The evening terminated with a magnificent exhibition of fire-works. Sir William Howe embarked, a few days after, on board the frigate *Andromeda*. He arrived the second of July at London, where the ministerial party assailed him with torrents of invective, while that in opposition exalted him above the stars.



## BOOK NINTH.

1778.

ON hearing of the catastrophe which had befallen Burgoyne, and of the almost fruitless victories of Howe, the British nation was seized with sullen affliction and discontent. The dejection was as profound as the hopes conceived had been sanguine, and the promises of ministers magnificent.

The parliament had acquiesced in all their demands, with respect to the prosecution of the war; and they had not failed to transmit to America, with promptitude, whatever was essential to the success of the preceding campaign. The generals invested with command, and the soldiers who had fought under them, were not inferior in reputation to any that England, or even Europe could produce. Hence it was inferred, that there must exist in the very nature of things, some insurmountable obstacle to victory, and the issue of the war began to be despaired of. For better or stronger armies could not be despatched to America, than those which had already been sent; and if the Americans, in the outset of their revolution, had not only withstood the English troops, but if they had even vanquished and disarmed them, of what might they not be thought capable in future, when, deriving new confidence from their successes, they should have consolidated their state by practice

and experience, and availed themselves of the time which had been allowed them, to develope still greater forces against their enemies? Accordingly, so far from there being any prospect of gaining what was not possessed, the danger appeared imminent of losing what was. Great fears were entertained especially for Canada, where the garrisons were extremely feeble, and the victorious army was upon the frontiers. No little apprehension was also felt, lest, in the heat of parties, some commotion might break out within that province, prejudicial to the interests of the king; independence being an enticing lure for every people, and especially for distant nations, and the example of the Americans was likely to influence their neighbours. Nor could it be dissembled, besides, that the Canadians, being French, for the most part, their national aversion would tend to fortify this natural proclivity, and finally, perhaps, produce some formidable convulsion. The British government beheld with grief that enlistments became every day more difficult in America, where the loyalists appeared intimidated by the recent victories of the republicans; and even in England, where the spirit of opposition showed itself more powerfully than ever, an extreme repugnance was evidenced to bearing arms in a distant and dangerous war, which many pronounced unjust and cruel, and which, even at that epoch, every thing announced must terminate ingloriously. Nor was the prospect more flattering of obtaining new troops from Germany: for the enormous armies kept on foot by the emperor, and the king of Prussia, exacted such a multitude of recruits, that the agents of England could not hope to procure them in any con-

siderable number. Moreover, the intervention of France and of the commissioners of Congress with those sovereigns, or that disposition to favour the American cause which unequivocally manifested itself in all parts of Europe, had already determined several German princes to refuse a passage through their states to those feeble parties of recruits which, with incredible pains and expense, were gleaned by the British agents. But there was one consideration which, more than any other, impeded the success of their negotiations: the moment was manifestly approaching when France would declare herself in favour of the Americans, no longer by secret intrigues, or the tacit protection afforded to their privateers, but openly, and with arms in hand. Already all her preparations for war, and especially her maritime armaments, were completed. The late victories of the Americans upon the borders of the Hudson, and even the constancy they had exhibited after their reverses upon the banks of the Delaware, were sufficient pledges that their cause might be espoused without any hazard of finding in them a fickle, a faithless, or a feeble ally. The occasion so long and so ardently desired by the French for humbling the British power and arrogance, was at length offered them by propitious fortune. Their wishes were admirably served by the blind obstinacy of the British ministers and generals, who had judged as erroneously of the nature and importance of things, as of the valour and constancy of the Americans. It was not at all doubted in England, that France would avail herself of the means which presented themselves to her grasp, to repair her ancient losses. This inevitable crisis took strong hold of the public attention,

and all perceived the necessity either of a long, and in no common degree perilous struggle, or of an accommodation upon little honourable terms, with that very people whose petitions had always been rejected, and who had been exasperated by so many outrages, before they were assailed by so cruel a war. Though the ministers and their adherents failed not to advance plausible reasons to justify themselves, and to authorize their conduct, yet the general opinion inclined to consider it as the more prudent counsel to listen at length to the demands of the Americans, and to adopt the course of procedure repeatedly proposed by the orators of the opposition, who had recommended that hostilities should be suspended, and a negotiation set on foot, which might lead to an admissible adjustment. Heavy complaints were heard on all parts, that so many favourable occasions for reconciliation had been allowed to escape, as if it was intended to wait the arrival of that fatal moment when it would no longer be possible either to negotiate with honour, or to fight with glory; and when, instead of any hope of subduing or conciliating America, there was too much reason to fear the loss of other inestimable portions of the British empire.

All the attempts made, previous to that time, for reducing the Americans to submission by force of arms, having proved completely abortive, it was bitterly regretted that, before undertaking new efforts, the failure of which must secure the triumph of the enemy, there had not been a disposition to listen to the conciliatory propositions submitted to parliament by the Earl of Chatham, in the sitting of the thirtieth of May, of the year last elapsed. Foreseeing the calamities



which were about to fall upon his country, since the ministers were resolved to prosecute extreme measures, and perceiving distinctly that to the dangers of an intestine struggle would soon be added the perils of a foreign war, this illustrious man, though bowed with age and labouring under a painful malady, had caused himself to be carried to the house of Lords, where, in that strain of admirable eloquence which always chained attention, he exerted the most magnanimous efforts to appease animosities, to extinguish the flames of war, to procure the repeal of those disastrous laws which had lighted them, and opposed an insuperable bar to the return of concord.

“My Lords,” he said, “this is a flying moment, perhaps but six weeks left to arrest the dangers that surround us. The gathering storm may break; it has already opened, and in part burst. It is difficult for government, after all that has passed, to shake hands with the defiers of the king, defiers of the parliament, defiers of the people. I am a defier of nobody; but if an end is not put to this war, there is an end to this country. I do not trust my judgment in my present state of health; this is the judgment of my better days; the result of forty years attention to America.

“They are rebels; but what are they rebels for? Surely not for defending their unquestionable rights? What have these rebels done heretofore? I remember when they raised four regiments on their own bottom, and took Louisburgh from the veteran troops of France. But their excesses have been great. I do not mean their panegyric; but must observe in attenuation, the erroneous and infatuated counsels which have prevailed: the door to mercy and justice has

been shut against them. But they may still be taken up upon the grounds of their former submission. I state to you the importance of America; it is a double market; the market of consumption, and the market of supply. This double market for millions, with naval stores, you are giving to your hereditary rival. America has carried you through four wars, and will now carry you to your death, if you don't take things in time. In the sportsman's phrase, when you have found yourselves at fault, you must try back. You have ransacked every corner of Lower Saxony; but forty thousand German boors never can subdue ten times the number of British freemen: they may ravage, they cannot conquer.

“ But you would conquer, you say! Why, what would you conquer; the map of America? I am ready to meet any general officer on the subject. What will you do out of the protection of your fleet? In the winter, if together, your troops are starved; and if dispersed, they are taken off in detail. I am experienced in spring hopes and vernal promises; I know what ministers throw out; but at last will come your equinoctial disappointment. They tell you—what? That your army will be as strong as last year, when it was not strong enough: You have got nothing in America but stations. You have been three years teaching them the art of war: they are apt scholars; and I will venture to tell your lordships, that the American gentry will make officers enough, fit to command the troops of all the European powers. What you have sent there, are too many to make peace, too few to make war. If you conquer them, what then? You cannot make them respect you; you

cannot make them wear your cloth. You will plant an invincible hatred in their breasts against you. You are giving America to France at the expense of twelve millions a year. The intercourse has produced every thing to her; and England, old England must pay for all. Your trade languishes, your taxes increase, your revenues dwindle; France, at this moment, is securing and drawing to herself that commerce which created your seamen, which fed your islands, which was the principal source of your wealth, prosperity and power. We have tried for unconditional submission; try what can be gained by unconditional redress. We shall thus evince a conciliatory spirit and open the way to concord.

“The ministers affirm there is no sort of treaty with France. Then, there is still a moment left; the point of honour is still safe. The instant a treaty appears you must declare war, though you had only five ships of the line in England; but France will defer a treaty as long as possible, to wait the effect of our self-destroying counsels. You are now at the mercy of every little German chancery; and the pretensions of France will increase daily, so as to become an avowed party in either peace or war. The dignity of the government is objected: but less dignity will be lost in the repeal of oppressive laws, than in submitting to the demands of German chanceries. We are the aggressors. We have invaded the colonists as much as the Spanish Armada invaded England. Mercy cannot do harm: it will seat the king where he ought to be, throned in the hearts of his people; and millions at home and abroad, now employed in obloquy and revolt, would pray for him.

The revocation I propose and amnesty, may produce a respectable division in America, and unanimity at home. It will give America an option; she has yet had no option. You have said, '*Lay down your arms,*' and she has given you the Spartan answer, '*Come, take.*'"

Neither the authority of such a man, nor the force of his speech, nor present evils, nor yet the fear of future, were sufficient to procure the adoption of his proposition. Those who opposed it, contended that it would by no means satisfy the Americans, since from the outset they had aimed at independency. They talked of the dignity of the realm, of the weakness of France, of the number of loyalists ready to declare themselves, the moment an occasion should offer itself: they harangued upon the tyranny of Congress, already become insupportable to all the Americans, upon the emptiness of its treasury, and the rapid depreciation of the bills of credit; finally, they enlarged upon that impatience which was universally manifested for the return of order, and the blessings enjoyed by the rest of the subjects of the British government.

In the midst of these contradictions had been agitated the question of peace and war, while the veil of uncertainty still shaded the future, and experience had not yet ascertained the effect of all the forces sent into America. But now the trial had been made, and the result being on the one hand so calamitous, and so dubious on the other, the obstinacy of ministers was almost universally condemned, while the wisdom and foresight of the Earl of Chatham, were exalted to the skies. That such opinions should have been enter-



tained by those whose interests and passions were so immediately concerned, is certainly no matter of astonishment; but it may be advanced with confidence, that the measure proposed by this, in other respects, most sagacious statesman, would have resulted in very doubtful consequences, to use no stronger words.

At this time, the Americans had already declared their independence; what the proposed concessions, seconded by formidable armies, might have operated before this declaration, they could no longer have done after it, especially when by the effect of this very declaration, and of the resistance made to the arms of Howe upon the territory of New Jersey, the Americans confidently expected to obtain the succours of France. Besides, if, at this epoch, the issue of a negotiation was uncertain, it would indubitably have reflected little honour upon the government, to have condescended to an arrangement, without having first made a trial of the efficacy of the armies it had collected and sent to America, with so much effort, and at so heavy an expense. Victory too, as it was reasonable to think, would have produced submission, or at least conditions more favourable to Great Britain.

The ministers therefore being resolved to continue the war, exerted their utmost diligence to repair those evils which the faults of men, or an inauspicious destiny, had drawn upon the state in the course of the preceding year. Their attention was first directed to the means of raising new troops, and of procuring more abundant pecuniary resources than had been granted them by the parliament. They reflected, that although there was a powerful party in the king-

dom who condemned the American war, still there existed another who approved it highly, either from conviction or from their devotion to the ministry. To this class they addressed themselves, not doubting their readiness to assist them with zeal in procuring the men and the funds they wanted. Dreading, however, the clamours of the opposition, who might represent this levy of soldiers and money, though voluntary, as a violation of the constitution, they carried this scheme into effect in the recess of parliament, which happened at the beginning of the current year, and which, with the same object in view, they prolonged beyond the accustomed term. They were the more sanguine in their hopes of success, inasmuch as, since the declaration of independence, and the secret alliance with France, of which every day furnished new evidences, the greater part of those who had shown themselves at first the warmest partisans of the Americans, had now deserted them, and gone over to the ministerial party. The ministers accordingly despatched their agents into the different provinces of the kingdom, and especially those where they had the greatest influence, with instructions to spur the inhabitants to enlist, and to lend their support to the state by voluntary gifts. These emissaries were to expatiate on the ingratitude of the Americans, the enmity of France, the necessities of the country, the glory and splendour of the English name, which must be transmitted unsullied to posterity. Their exertions were attended with success in some cities of the first order, and even in some towns of inferior rank; but none manifested greater zeal than Liverpool and Manchester, each of which raised, at their

own expense, a regiment of a thousand men. The Scotch, naturally a warlike people, and much devoted to the cause of government in the present war, exhibited the utmost ardour to engage in the service. Edinburgh levied a thousand men, Glasgow an equal number. The highlanders, a hardy race, descended in hordes from their craggy hills, to follow the royal standard. Equal promptitude was manifested in contributing to the public expense, and free gifts multiplied every day. The government would have wished that the city of London, on account of its population and wealth, and of its importance as the capital of the kingdom, had placed itself at the head of this contribution. It was hoped that city would raise and maintain at its own expense five thousand men for three years, or until the end of the war. This hope proved illusory. The citizens being convened, refused peremptorily. The common council returned an answer equally unfavourable. The partisans of the ministry were not discouraged. They vociferated at every corner that it was a shame for the city of London, that, after having voted, but a few days before, considerable sums for the relief of Americans taken with arms in hand levelled against England, it should now refuse to give the slightest succour to the country. The friends of the ministry assembled, and subscribed twenty thousand pounds sterling. The same manœuvres took place at Bristol, and with the same success. This city would not furnish troops; it consented only to give the same sum as London. The ministers experienced still more difficulties in the country: the land-holders being grown sulky at the weight of their assessments,

and at having been deceived by promises that the American taxes were to be in diminution of their own. Upon the whole, this project of voluntary levies, and gratuitous contributions, though not absolutely fruitless, was still very far from affording the resources which had been counted upon. It however became the subject of violent declamations in parliament; but with the usual event: the ministry triumphed.

While such was the procedure of the English government, in order to sustain the struggle in which it was engaged, the Congress urged with new fervour the negotiations which they had already, a long time back, set on foot with the court of France. The American commissioners had left nothing unessayed that could decide it to declare openly in their favour; but however pressing were their solicitations with the French ministers to induce them to take a definitive resolution, they had not as yet obtained any thing but evasive and dilatory answers. In this first period of the American revolution, *considering the uncertainty of its issue*, France hesitated to espouse the quarrel of a people whose force appeared insufficient to sustain the pressure of so perilous an enterprise. She feared lest the colonists might all at once desist, and resume all their ancient relations with England. Those who directed the counsels of France were not ignorant, that at the very moment in which she should declare herself, the British ministry, by acquiescing in the concessions demanded by the Americans, might instantly disarm them, and that France would then find herself alone saddled with a war, without motive, and without object.



To this consideration was added, that before coming to an open rupture with Great Britain, it was essential to restore order in the finances, and to re-establish the marine, both having suffered excessively from the disorder, disasters and prodigality of the preceding reign. The declaration of independence, it is true, had removed the danger of a sudden reconciliation; *but it was still possible to doubt the success of resistance. Nor should we omit to say, that, though France would rather see America independent, than reconciled with England, she relished the prospect of a long war between them, still better than independence. Perhaps, even, she would have liked best of all a conquest by dint of arms, and the consequent subjugation; for, upon this hypothesis, the English colonies, ravaged and ruined, would have ceased to enrich the mother country, by the benefits of their commerce in time of peace; and in time of war, the English would no longer have found in their colonists those powerful auxiliaries, who so often had succoured them with so much efficacy. Should the colonies, though vanquished, preserve their ancient prosperity, then England would be constrained to maintain in them a part of her force, in order to prevent the revolts she would have continually to dread on the part of a people impressed with the recollection of so many outrages and cruelties.*

But upon the second hypothesis, or that of independence, it was impossible to dissemble that the example would be pernicious for the colonies of other European powers, and that the smallest of the probable inconveniences, would be the necessity of granting them, to the great prejudice of the mother country, a full and entire liberty of commerce. These

considerations, carefully weighed by the French ministers, so wrought, that repressing their ardour for war, they covered their projects with an impenetrable veil, and drew the negotiation into length. They restricted themselves to expressions of benevolence towards the Americans, and to granting them clandestinely the succours we have spoken of in another place. And even those succours were furnished with more or less mystery, more or less liberality, as fortune showed herself propitious or adverse to the American arms. Such was the rigour with which France adhered, or appeared to adhere, to this wary policy, either with a view of not breaking before the time with England, or in order the more effectually to place the Americans at her discretion, and constrain them to subscribe to all her demands, that when the news arrived at Paris of the capture of Ticonderoga, and of the victorious march of Burgoyne towards Albany, events which seemed to decide in favour of the English, instructions were immediately despatched to Nantz, and the other ports of the kingdom, that no American privateers should be suffered to enter them, except from indispensable necessity, as to repair their vessels, to obtain provisions, or to escape the perils of the sea. Thus France, pursuing invariably the route prescribed by *reason of state*, which admirably suited her convenience, on the one hand amused the British ministers with protestations of friendship, and on the other encouraged the Americans with secret succours, by the uncertainty and scantiness of them, inflaming their ardour, and confirming their resolution by continual promises of future co-operation. Unshackled in her movements,

she thus pledged herself to no party, but tranquilly waited to see what course things would take. The agents of Congress did not fail, however, to urge and besiege the cabinet of Versailles to come at length to a final decision. But the French ministers, with many tosses and shrugs, alleged a variety of excuses in support of their system of procrastination, at one time, that the fleet expected from Newfoundland, crowded with excellent seamen, was not yet arrived; at another, that the galleons of Spain were still at sea, and now some other subterfuge was invented. Thus alternately advancing and receding, never allowing their intentions to be fathomed, they kept the Americans in continual uncertainty. Finally, the commissioners, out of all patience, and determined, if practicable, without waiting longer, to extricate themselves from this labyrinth, imagined an expedient for reducing the French ministers themselves to the necessity of dropping the vizard: this was to suggest, that if France did not assist them immediately, the Americans could defer no longer a voluntary or compulsory arrangement with England.

To this effect, they waited upon the ministers about the middle of August 1777, with a memorial in which they represented that if France supposed that the war could be continued for any considerable time longer without her interference she was much mistaken. "Indeed," continued the memorial, "the British government have every thing to lose and nothing to gain, by continuing the war. After the present campaign, they will therefore doubtless make it their great and last effort to recover the dominion of America, and terminate the war. They probably hope that a few

victories may, by the chance of war, be obtained; and that these on one hand, and the wants and distresses of the colonists on the other, may induce them to return again to a dependence, more or less limited, on Great Britain. They must be sensible, that if ever America is to be conquered by them, it must be within the present year: that if it be impossible to do it in this year of the dispute, it will be madness to expect more success afterwards, when the difficulties of the Americans' former situation are removed; when their new independent governments have acquired stability; and when the people are become, as they soon will be, well armed, disciplined and supplied with all the means of resistance.

“The British ministry must therefore be sensible, that a continuation of hostilities against the colonies, after this year, can only tend to prolong the danger, or invite an additional war in Europe; and they therefore doubtless intend, after having tried the success of this campaign, however it may end, to make peace on the best terms which can be obtained. And if they cannot recover the colonies as subjects, to admit their claim of independency, and secure them by a federal alliance. Therefore no means are left for France to prevent the colonists from being shortly reconciled to Great Britain, either as subjects or allies, but to enter immediately into such engagements with them as will necessarily preclude all others; such as will permanently bind and secure their commerce and friendship, and enable them as well to repel the attacks, as to spurn at the offers of their present enemy.



“France must remember,” it was added, “that the first resistance of the colonists was not to obtain independency, but a redress of their grievances; and that there are many among them who might even now be satisfied with a limited subjection to the British crown. A majority has indeed put in for the prize of independency: they have done it on a confidence that France, attentive to her most important interests, would soon give them open and effectual support. But when they find themselves disappointed; when they see some of the powers of Europe furnish troops to assist in their subjugation; another power, alluding to Portugal, proscribing their commerce; and the rest looking on, as indifferent spectators; it is very probable that, despairing of foreign aid, and severely pressed by their enemies and their own internal wants and distresses, they may be inclined to accept of such terms as it will be the interest of the British government to grant them. Lord George Germain, but a few weeks since, declared in the house of commons that his hope of ending the American war this year, was principally founded on the disappointment which the colonists would feel, when they discover that no assistance is likely to be given them from France. The British adherents in America will spare no pains to spread and increase that disappointment, by discouraging representations; they already intimate that France, equally hostile to both parties, foment the present war, only to make them mutually instrumental in each others destruction.

“Should Great Britain, by these and other means, detach the colonies, and re-unite them to herself, France will irrecoverably lose the most favourable opportuni-

ty ever offered to any nation, of humbling a powerful, arrogant, and hereditary enemy.

“But it is not simply the opportunity of reducing Great Britain, which France will lose by her present inactivity; for her own safety, and that of all her American possessions, will be endangered the moment in which a reconciliation takes place between Britain and America. The king and ministry of Great Britain know and feel that France has encouraged and assisted the colonists in their present resistance; and they are as much incensed against her, as they would be, were she openly to declare war. In truth, France has done too much, unless she intends to do more.

“Can any one doubt but that whenever peace with America is obtained by Great Britain, whatever may be the conditions of it, the whole British force now on the continent of America, will be suddenly transported to the West Indies, and employed in subduing the French sugar islands there, to recompense the losses and expenses which Great Britain has suffered and incurred in this war, and to revenge the insult and injury France has done her, by the encouragement and assistance which she is supposed to have secretly given the colonists against Great Britain?”

Such was the purport of the memorial presented to the French government, in order to terminate its hesitations: but this also was without success. The ministers were no less ingenious in discovering new evasions; they chose to wait to see the progress of this war. The news of the taking of Ticonderoga, and the fear of still more decisive operations on the part of general Howe, maintained their doubts and indecision. They were loath to have no other part to

play than extending the hand to insurgents, when already their wreck appeared inevitable. We venture not to say, that in this occurrence was again verified the vulgar maxim: *the unfortunate have no friends*; but it appeared, at least, that the cabinet of Versailles was determined to procrastinate until the distress of the Americans was arrived at such a point as to become their only law; that it might obtain from them the better conditions for France. Besides, as at this time there was much appearance that the British arms would carry all before them, an accommodation between the mother country and the colonies, seemed less probable than ever; and this was what the French government had feared the most. The ministers of England, supposing them victorious in America, would have listened to no conditions short of an absolute submission; and the French appeared to desire this extremity even more than independence, provided only, that it was introduced by a long and desolating war.

Disgusted by so many delays, the American commissioners no longer entertained any doubt as to the secret policy which guided the French in this conjuncture. In their despair, they had well nigh broken off all negotiation with a government that reputed their misfortunes a source of prosperity to itself. Unable, therefore, to accomplish their views with France, and discerning no other prospect of safety, the Americans again addressed themselves to England, proposing to her the recognition of their independence. This point conceded, they would have yielded in all others, to such conditions as should most tend to save the honour of the mother country.

They represented, that if the British ministry knew how to profit of the occasion, it depended on themselves to stipulate an arrangement so conducive to the prosperity of Great Britain, that she would seek in vain to procure herself similar advantages by any other means. But the British government, elated with the first successes of Burgoyne, and persuaded that fortune could not escape him, refused to listen to any overtures for accommodation, and rejected the proposition with disdain. The blindness of the British ministers was incurable: the Americans, in the midst of the most disastrous reverses, and deprived of all hope of foreign succour, strenuously refusing to renounce their independence, insisting even to make it an indispensable condition of their reconciliation, it was manifest that the re-union of the two states was become impossible; and that since the necessity of things and inexorable destiny pronounced that America should no longer be subject, it was better to have her for ally than for an enemy. But the defeat and capture of Burgoyne, by announcing with such energy the rising greatness of America, had given new ardour to the patriots: new hopes and new fears to the French. Their reciprocal situation became less ambiguous; each began to manifest more positive resolutions. England herself, if her king and his ministers had yielded less to their individual prepossessions, would have prudently paused: and abandoning an enterprise above her strength, would have resorted to the only way of safety that she had left. But pride, obstinacy and intrigue are too often the ruin of states; and *Lord Bute was incessantly smoothing that route for king George.* After the victory of Saratoga,



the Americans pursued with rare sagacity the policy prescribed by their new circumstances. Their conduct demonstrated as much ability as experience in affairs of state. They reflected, that as their successes had increased their strength, rendered their alliance more desirable, and banished *all doubts* from enlightened minds respecting their independence, nothing could be better calculated on their part, than to give jealousy to France, by pretending a disposition to make alliance with England; and disquietude to England, by the appearance of courting the strictest union with France. They hoped by this conduct to arrive at length at something conclusive. Accordingly, the same express that carried to England the news of the capitulation of Saratoga, was the bearer of despatches, the drift of which was to insinuate, that the Americans, disgusted by the excessive delays of the French, and indignant at not having received in the midst of their reverses, avowed and more efficacious succours, were eagerly desirous of an accommodation with England, and to conclude with her a treaty of commerce, provided she acknowledged their independence. In order to give more weight to this suggestion, it was added, that the colonists would feel particular gratification in a reconciliation with their ancient country; whereas, in the contrary case, they should be compelled to throw themselves into the arms of the inveterate and implacable enemy of the English name.

General Gates, on whom his recent victory reflected so much lustre, wrote to the same effect, to one of the most distinguished members of parliament. These steps of the chiefs of the American revolution were

likewise necessary to satisfy the people, who would not, without extreme repugnance, have seen themselves thrust precipitately into the party of France, before having attempted every probable mode of effecting an adjustment with England. The prejudices they entertained against France were still in all their force; and the persuasion that this power had speculated upon their misfortunes, had greatly exasperated their aversion. These negotiations were no secret to the court of Versailles, as they had been communicated to Franklin, who knew how to make the best use of them; the umbrage they gave the French ministers will be readily conceived. Franklin, about the same time, received instructions to reiterate his expostulations with the government, that it might at length discover itself, since otherwise, it was to be feared that England, convinced by the catastrophe of Burgoyne, and even by the useless victories of Howe, that the reduction of America, by dint of arms, was absolutely impossible, would acknowledge independence. The Americans, he added, finding themselves deserted by the French, will be constrained to listen to the overtures of the English, and to accept of favour wherever they find it; and such an arrangement could not have effect but to the irreparable prejudice of the interests of France. The ministers perceived clearly that the time was come, in which, if they would not lose the fruit of all their policy, it was necessary finally to lay aside the personage of the fox, and to assume the nature of the lion. Judging the British ministers by themselves, they supposed them entirely exempt from all passion, as statesmen ought to be; consequently, fearing the measures which their

wisdom might prescribe, they determined to resume, and bring to a conclusion, the negotiations they had opened already so long since with the Americans, and which they had so shrewdly prolonged.

This decision appeared to them the more urgent, as they were not ignorant that the great body of the inhabitants of America, their independence once established, would much more willingly have coalesced with the English, a people of the same blood, of the same language, of the same manners, and still not entirely forgetful of former friendship, than with the French, a nation not only foreign and rival, but reputed faithless; whose long hesitations had countenanced the imputation, and against whom, from their tenderest childhood, they had fostered the most unfavourable prepossessions. On the other hand, the Americans had supported three entire years of the most trying distress, without having ever discovered the least disposition to relinquish their enterprise, or the least mark of weariness in their conflict with adverse fortune. Their moderation had not deserted them in success; and the perseverance of their efforts had given to the first victories of the English all the consequences of defeats. These considerations had persuaded the ministers of France that America had knowledge, power and will to keep the faith of treaties.

The resolution of finally taking an active part in this war, by extending an auxiliary hand to the Americans, could not fail, besides, of being highly agreeable to the greater part of the French nation. The motive of it was not merely to be found in the inveterate hatred borne the English, in the remembrance of recent wounds, in the desire of revenge, and in the

political opinions which, at that period, had spread throughout the kingdom, but also in numerous and powerful considerations of commercial advantage. The trade which had been carried on between France and America, since the commencement of disturbances, and especially since the breaking out of hostilities, had yielded the French merchants immense gains. All of these, therefore, eagerly desired that the new order of things might be perpetuated by independence, in order never to see the times revived, in which the prohibitory laws of parliament, and especially the act of navigation, would have deprived them of these benefits. It is true, however, that they had not found this commerce so lucrative as they had anticipated; for several of them, hurried away by the excessive love of gain, and principally those of the maritime cities, had despatched to America ships loaded with valuable merchandise, a great number of which had been taken on the passage by the British cruisers. But even these losses stimulated their desire to be able to continue the same commerce, and to witness the reduction of that British audacity which pretended to reign alone upon an element common to the whole universe. They hoped that the royal navy in open war would afford protection to the ships of commerce; and that force would thus shield the enterprises of cupidity. The French had, besides, in this conjuncture, the hope, or rather the certainty, that Spain would take part in the quarrel. This was a consideration of weight, in addition to the motives which always influenced them. That kingdom had a formidable marine, and was animated with so strong a desire to make trial of it against England, that the



French court, rigidly adhering to its plan of circum-spection, had hitherto thought it prudent to check rather than stimulate the cabinet of Madrid. It was not in the least doubted, that all the united forces of the house of Bourbon, already so long prepared, and directed towards the same object, were more than sufficient to take down the intolerable arrogance of the English, to protect rich cargoes from their insults, and even to cause the commerce of the two Indies to pass almost entirely into the hands of the French and Spaniards.

Thus favoured by circumstances, and by the voice of the people, the French government had more need of prudence to restrain it from precipitating its resolutions, than of ardour, to incite it to encounter the hazards of fortune. Never, assuredly, had any government to adopt a counsel more recommended by the unanimous and ardent wishes of its subjects, or which promised a more fortunate issue, or more brilliant advantages. Unable, therefore, to resist longer the pressing solicitations of the agents of Congress, the ministers resolved at length to seize the occasion, and to conclude with America the treaty which had been the object of such long negotiations. But as, heretofore, the intention of France had been to elude any positive engagement, the articles of the convention, though often and deliberately discussed, were not yet settled. Under the apprehension, however, that the British government, in case of further delays, might tempt the Americans with conciliatory overtures, the French ministers concluded to signify to the commissioners of Congress the preliminaries of the treaty of friendship and commerce, to be stipulat-

ed between the two states. This communication was made the sixteenth of December, 1777, by M. Gerard, royal syndic of the city of Strasbourg, and secretary of the king's council of state. Its purport was as follows: "That France would not only acknowledge, but support with all her forces the independence of the United States, and would conclude with them a treaty of amity and commerce; that in the stipulations of this treaty she would take no advantage of the present situation of the United States, but that the articles of it should be of the same nature as if the said states had been long established, and were constituted in all the plenitude of their strength: that his most christian majesty plainly foresaw that in taking this step, he should probably enter upon a war with Great Britain; but that he desired no indemnification upon that score on the part of the United States; not pretending to act solely with a view to their particular interest, since, besides the benevolence he bore them, it was manifest, that the power of England would be diminished by the dismemberment of her colonies. The king expected only, with full confidence, from the United States, that whatever was the peace which might be concluded eventually, they would never renounce their independence, and resume the yoke of British domination." This declaration on the part of France, re-assured the minds of the Americans: it was followed by very active negotiations during all the month of January. They were immediately communicated to Spain, that she might also, if so inclined, become a party to the convention: nor was it

long before a favourable answer was received from that court.

All difficulties being surmounted, and the conditions acceded to on the one part and on the other, upon the sixth of February was concluded the treaty of amity between his most christian majesty and the United States of America. It was signed on behalf of the king by M. Gerard, and for the United States by Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. By this treaty, in which the king of France considered the United States of America as an independent nation, were regulated between the contracting parties, various maritime and commercial interests concerning the duties which merchant vessels were to pay in the ports of the friendly state: it guarantied the reciprocal protection of vessels in time of war; the right of fishery, and especially that which the French carried on upon the banks of Newfoundland, by virtue of the treaties of Utrecht and of Paris: it exempted from the right of *Aubaine*, as well the French in America, as the Americans in France: it provided for the exercise of commerce, and the admission of privateers with one of the contracting parties, in case the other should be at war with a third power. To this effect, in order to preclude all occasion of dissention, it was determined by an express clause, what articles, in time of war, should be deemed contraband, and what should be considered free, and consequently might be freely transported, and introduced by the subjects of the two powers into enemy ports; those excepted, however, which should be found at the time, besieged, blockaded or invested. It was also agreed that the ships and vessels of the

contracting parties should not be subject to any visit; it being intended that all visit or search should take place prior to the clearance of the shipping, and that contraband articles should be seized in port, and not upon the voyage, except, however, the cases, where there should be had indications or proofs of fraud. It was stipulated, besides, that in order to facilitate the commerce of the United States with France, his most christian majesty should grant them, as well in Europe as in the islands of America subject to his dominion, several free ports. Finally, the king pledged himself to employ his good offices and mediation with the emperor of Morocco, and with the regencies of Algiers, Tripoli, Tunis, and other powers of the coast of Barbary, in order that provision should be made in the best possible mode for the accommodation and security of the citizens, ships, and merchandise, "of the United States of America." It is to be observed, that this treaty, besides the recognition made in it of American independence, was completely subversive of the principles which the British government had uniformly attempted to establish as well with respect to the commerce of neutrals, in time of war, as with regard to the blockade of the ports of an enemy state by the British squadrons. Consequently, it was easy to foresee that, although France had not contracted to furnish succours of any sort to the United States, Great Britain, nevertheless, on being so wounded to the quick in her pride, and in her most essential interests, would manifest a keen resentment, and would probably declare war against France. Hence it was, that the contracting parties concluded the same day another, eventual, treaty of alliance, offensive and de-



fensive, which was to take its effect so soon as war should break out between France and England. The two parties engaged to assist each other with good offices, with counsel, and with arms. It was stipulated, a thing until then unheard of, on the part of a king, that the essential and express object of the alliance, was to maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty, and independence of the United States. It was also covenanted, that if the remaining provinces of Great Britain upon the American continent, or the Bermuda islands, came to be conquered, they should become confederates or dependents of the United States: but if any of the islands were taken situated within, or at the entrance of the gulf of Mexico, these should belong to the crown of France. It was agreed that neither of the two parties could conclude truce or peace with Great Britain without the consent of the other. They reciprocally obligated themselves not to lay down arms, until the independence of the United States should be either formally or tacitly acknowledged in the treaties which should terminate the war. They guarantied to each other, that is the United States to the king of France, his present possessions in America, as well as those he might obtain by the treaty of peace; and the king of France, to the United States, liberty, sovereignty and independence, absolute and unlimited, as well in point of government as of commerce, and likewise those possessions, additions and conquests which the confederation might acquire in the domains of Great Britain in North America. A separate and secret article reserved to the king of Spain the faculty of becoming a party to the treaty of amity and com-

merce, as well as to that of alliance, at such time as he should think proper.

Thus France, ever bearing in mind the wounds received in the war of Canada, and always jealous of the power of England, at first by wily intrigues and distant suggestions, then by clandestine succours, and if convenient disavowed, had encouraged the English colonies in their resistance; at length, openly taking them by the hand, she saluted them independent. The French government displayed a profound policy, and singular dexterity in the execution of this plan: it may even be affirmed, that in no other affair, however important, and in no other time, has it ever exhibited so much sagacity and stability. Its operations were covert, while it was perilous to come out, and it threw off the mask so soon as the successes of the colonists permitted them to be looked upon as safe allies. It took the field when its armies and especially its fleets were in perfect preparation, when all its subjects were favourably disposed, when every thing, in a word, promised victory. It would be difficult to paint the transports of exultation which burst forth in France on the publication of the new treaties. The merchants enjoyed in advance those riches which until then had been confined to the ports of England; the land-holders imagined that their taxes would be diminished in proportion to the increased prosperity of commerce: the soldiers, and especially the seamen, hoped to avenge their affronts, and recover their ancient glory; the generous spirits exulted that France declared herself, as she should be, the protectress of the oppressed; the friends of liberal principles applauded her for having undertaken the defence of liberty.

All united in blessing the long wished for occasion of repressing the detestable pride of a rival nation. All were persuaded that the losses sustained in the preceding reign were about to be repaired; it was every where exclaimed, that the destinies promised to the crown of France were about to be accomplished. "Such," it was said, "are the happy auspices which usher in the reign of a clement and beloved Prince; too long have we suffered; let us hail the dawn of a more fortunate future." Nor was it only in France that this enthusiasm of joy was witnessed; the same disposition of minds prevailed in almost all the states of Europe. The Europeans lauded, and exalted to the skies, the generosity and the magnanimity of Lewis XVI. Such, at that time was the general abhorrence excited by the conduct of the British government; or such was the affection borne to the American cause.

Shortly after the subscription of the treaties, and long before they were made public, the British ministry had knowledge of them. It is asserted that some of its members, wishing to embrace this occasion for the re-establishment of concord between the two parties, proposed in the secret councils to acknowledge immediately the independence of the colonies, and to negotiate with them a treaty of commerce and alliance. But the king, either guided by his natural obstinacy, or docile as heretofore to the instigations of lord Bute, refused his consent to this measure. It was therefore resolved to proceed by middle ways, which, if they are the least painful, lead also the most rarely to success. They consisted, on this occasion, not in acknowledging independence,

which, at this time, it was easier to deny than to prevent, but in renouncing the right of taxation, in revoking the laws complained of, in granting pardons, in acknowledging for a certain time the American authorities; and, finally, in negotiating with them. This plan of conduct, which was not less, and perhaps more, derogatory to the dignity of the crown than the acknowledgement of independence, offered, besides, less real advantage to England; it was accordingly blamed by all prudent and intelligent politicians. None could avoid seeing, that if it was questionable, whether these measures would have operated the desired effect before the declaration of independence and the alliance with France, it was indubitable that afterwards they must prove absolutely fruitless. That proclivity which men have by nature towards independence, was likely to prevail in the minds of the Americans over the proposal of resuming their former yoke, whatever were the advantages that could have resulted from it. Another consideration must have acted upon them, and particularly upon their chiefs: they were not ignorant, that in state matters it is little prudent to confide in the pardon of princes; neither had they forgotten that these very ministers, who made them such bland proposals, were the same men who had attempted to starve America, had filled it with ferocious soldiers, with devastation and with blood. Besides, if the Americans should have broken the faith which they had just pledged to France, they would have declared themselves guilty of a scandalous perfidy: abandoned by their new allies, could they have hoped after such treachery, to find in their utmost distress,



a single power on earth that would deign to succour them? They would have found themselves exposed, without shield or defence, to the fury and vengeance of Great Britain.

But, perhaps, the British ministers believed, that if the measures proposed were not to bring about an arrangement, they might, at least, divide opinions, give birth to powerful parties, and thus, by intestine dissensions, facilitate the triumph of England. Perhaps, also, and probably they persuaded themselves, that if the Americans rejected the propositions for an adjustment, they would at least have a colourable pretence for continuing the war. But whether the procedure of the ministers at this juncture was free or forced, Lord North, in the sitting of the house of commons, of the nineteenth of February, made a very grave speech upon the present state of affairs. He remarked, that Sir William Howe had not only been in the late actions, and in the whole course of the campaign, in goodness of troops and in all manner of supplies, but in numbers, too, much superior to the enemy: that Burgoyne had been in numbers, until the affair at Bennington, near twice as strong as the army opposed to him; that sixty thousand men and upwards, had been sent to America, a force which even exceeded the demands of the generals; but fortune had shown herself so unpropitious, that it had been impossible to reap those advantages which were reasonably to have been expected from it. He concluded with saying, that although Great Britain was most able to continue the war, not only from the abundance of men, and the strength of the navy, but from the flourishing condition of the finances, which

might be still increased by a loan at low interest, yet out of that desire which every good government ought to have, to put an end to war, the ministry had determined to submit to the deliberations of the house certain conciliatory propositions, from which he expected the most happy results. The general attention was evinced by a profound silence; no mark of approbation was manifested by any party. Astonishment, dejection and fear overclouded the whole assembly; so different was the present language of the ministers from what they had ever used before: it was concluded they had been forced to it by some serious cause. Fox took this opportunity to exclaim, that the treaty of alliance between France and the United States was already signed: the agitation and tumult became extreme. Lord North moved the resolution, that the parliament could not in future impose any tax or duty in the colonies of North America, except such only as should be deemed beneficial to commerce, and the product even of those to be collected under the authority of the respective colonies, and to be employed for their use and advantage. He proposed, besides, that five commissioners should be appointed, empowered to adjust with any assembly or individual whatsoever, the differences existing between Great Britain and her colonies, it being understood, however, that the compacts were not to take effect till ratified by the parliament.

The commissioners were, also, to be authorized to proclaim armistices wherever they should think proper, to suspend prohibitory laws, and generally all laws promulgated since the tenth of February, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three; and to par-

don whoever, and as many as they pleased. Finally, they were to have authority to appoint governors and commanders-in-chief in the reconciled provinces.

Thus the British ministers, now urged by necessity, all at once conceded what they had refused during fifteen years, and what they had been contending for in a sanguinary and cruel war, already of three years standing. Whether it was the fault of fortune, or their own, they appeared in this conjuncture as in all others, inflexible when they should have yielded, and pliant when too late. Incapable of controlling events, they were dragged along by them. The bills proposed passed almost without opposition in parliament; but without, they excited universal discontent. "Such concessions, it was vociferated, are too unworthy of the British name and power; they would only be admissible in an extremity, such as, heaven be thanked, England is still far from being reduced to; they are calculated to sow discouragement amongst us, to enervate our armies, to embolden our enemies, and to detach our allies. Since the right of taxation is renounced, which was the first motive and cause of the war, why not go farther, and acknowledge independency?" In a word, the ministers were charged with having done too much, or too little; the common fate of those, who, from timidity betake themselves to half measures; whose prudence and vigour prove equally vain. Nor were the ministers only exposed to the animadversions of the opposite party: the most moderate citizens expressed a no less decided disapprobation. Nevertheless, the king appointed not long after, for commissioners, the earl of Carlisle, Lord Howe, William Eden, George

Johnstone, and the commander-in-chief, of the English army in America; individuals highly distinguished, either by their rank, or by the celebrity of their achievements, or by their intelligence and experience in American affairs: The Earl of Carlisle, Eden and Johnstone, sailed from St. Helen's the twenty-first of April, on board the ship *Trident*.

In the midst of this complication of novel events, and of novel measures, and while the entire British nation was anxiously looking towards the future, the Marquis de Noailles, ambassador of his most Christian majesty, at the court of England, in pursuance of instructions from his sovereign, delivered on the thirteenth of March to Lord Weymouth, secretary of state for foreign affairs, the following declaration:

“The United States of America, which are in full possession of the independence declared by their act of the fourth of July, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six, having made a proposal to the king, to consolidate, by a formal convention, the connections that have begun to be established between the two nations, the respective plenipotentiaries have signed a treaty of amity and commerce, intended to serve as a basis for mutual good correspondence.

“His majesty, being resolved to cultivate the good understanding subsisting between France and Great Britain, by all the means compatible with his dignity, and with the good of his subjects, thinks that he ought to impart this step to the court of London, and declare to it, at the same time, that the contracting parties have had attention not to stipulate any exclusive advantage in favour of the French nation, and that the United States have preserved the liberty of



treating with all nations whatsoever on the same foot of equality and reciprocity.

“In making this communication to the court of London, the king is firmly persuaded, that it will find in it fresh proofs of his majesty’s constant and sincere dispositions for peace; and that his Britannic majesty, animated by the same sentiments, will equally avoid every thing that may interrupt good harmony: and that he will take, in particular, effectual measures to hinder the commerce of his majesty’s subjects with the United States of America from being disturbed, and cause to be observed, in this respect, the usages received between trading nations and the rules that may be considered as subsisting between the crowns of France and Great Britain.

“In this just confidence, the underwritten ambassador might think it superfluous to apprise the British ministry, that the king his master, being determined effectually to protect the lawful freedom of the commerce of his subjects, and to sustain the honour of his flag, his majesty has taken in consequence eventual measures, in concert with the United States of North America.”

This declaration, so full of matter in itself, and presented with very little ceremony by the French ambassador, stung British pride to the quick. If it was one of those shrewd turns which are not unusual among princes in their reciprocal intercourse, it was also one of those which they are not accustomed to forgive. France had foreseen its consequences, and far from dreading them, they were the very object of her wishes and hopes. Lord North communicated, the seventeenth of March, the note of the French minister

to the house of commons, with a message from the king, purporting that his majesty had thought proper in consequence of this offensive declaration on the part of the government of France, to recall his ambassador from that court; that he had been sincerely desirous to preserve the tranquillity of Europe; and that he trusted he should not stand responsible for its interruption, if he resented so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression on the honour of his crown, and the essential interests of his kingdoms, contrary to the most solemn assurances, subversive of the law of nations, and injurious to the rights of every sovereign power in Europe. He concluded with saying, that relying with the firmest confidence on the zeal of his people, he hoped to be in a condition to repel every insult and attack, and to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of his crown.

This resolution surprised no one: it was already the subject of conversation in all companies. Lord North moved the usual address of thanks to the king, with assurance of the support of parliament. A member named Baker, proposed that the king should be entreated to remove from his counsels those persons in whom his people could no longer repose any sort of confidence. This amendment was supported with great spirit. It was then that governor Pownall, a man of weight, and particularly conversant in American affairs, rose and spoke in much the following terms:

“I do not deem it consistent with the business of this solemn day, which is about to decide upon the immediate re-establishment, or irreparable ruin of our country, to go into the enquiry whether the present

ministers are longer to be trusted with the conduct of the battered ship of the state, in the midst of tempests, or whether we are to commit the helm to other hands. Considerations of far higher importance, if I am not mistaken, demand all your attention. For whatever these ministers may be, against whom I hear such bitter murmurs, if we have the wisdom to take this day a suitable resolution, I have not the least doubt but that even they will be capable of executing it with success. If, on the contrary, persisting in the measures which have brought us into this critical position, we add a new blunder to all our past errors, neither these nor any other ministers can save us from perdition.

“ Besides, those who are desirous of investigating the causes of our disasters, and who impute them to the present servants of the crown, will have an early opportunity for sifting that subject to their wish, in the regular examination of their conduct, which is to occupy this house in a few days. But what is the business before us, and what is the subject of our immediate deliberations? Faithless and haughty France rises against us; she threatens us with war, if we presume to resent, nay, if we do not accept the insulting conditions she dictates. Where is the citizen who loves his country, where is the Briton who is not fired with indignation, who is not impatient to avenge the outrages of this implacable rival? I also have British blood in my veins; I feel it in the transports which animate me, I approve high and magnanimous resolutions. But what I condemn, and so long as I have life will always condemn, is the impolicy of hurrying to encounter two wars instead of

one, and of choosing rather to add a new enemy to the old, than to be reconciled with the latter, in order to operate in concert against the former. To vanquish France and America together, is an enterprise to be reckoned among impossible events; to triumph over the first after having disarmed the second, is not only possible, but easy. But in order to attain this object, it is necessary to acknowledge, what we can no longer prevent, I mean American independence. And what are the obstacles which oppose so salutary a resolution? or by what reasons can it be combated? Perhaps the desire of glory, or the honour of the crown? But honour resides in victory; shame in defeat; and in affairs of state, the useful is always honourable.

“We should consider also, that in acknowledging the independence of the United States, we acknowledge not only what is, but also what we have already recognised, if not in form, at least in fact. In those very acts of conciliation which we have so lately passed, we acknowledge, if we would speak ingenuously, that we have renounced all sort of supremacy. If our intention is to maintain it, we have already gone too far; but if our desire of peace be sincere, we have not gone far enough; and every step we shall take to put the Americans back from independency, will convince them the more of the necessity of going forward. Inveterate inclinations are not so easily changed, and resolutions taken after long and mature deliberations, are not so lightly diverted.

“If we look well into the great acts of their proceedings, we shall soon be satisfied that they were not suddenly taken up as an ebullition of enthusiasm, or in the bitterness of passion or revenge, but rather



as coming on of course, by a train of events, linked together by a system of policy. Their march was slow, but in measured steps; feeling their ground before they set their foot on it; yet when once set, there fixed for ever. They made their declaration of rights in 1774, itself but little compatible with British supremacy. They afterwards confirmed it by a manifesto, in which they proclaimed their reasons for taking up arms; and finally they declared their independence, which is but the pinnacle and accomplishment of that work which they had long since commenced, which they were assisted in perfecting by the very nature of things, and which they have so valiantly defended in three successive campaigns.

“If these people, when they viewed their cause abandoned, as to all assistance which they looked to in Europe: when sinking, as to all appearance of what the utmost exertions of their own resources had done; when clouded with despair; would not give up the ground of independence, on which they were determined to stand; what hopes can there be, and from what quarter, that they will now, when every event of fate and fortune is reversed to us, and turned in their favour; when they feel their own power able to resist, to counteract, and in one deplorable instance, superior to, and victorious over ours; when they see their cause taken up in Europe; when they find the nations amongst which they have taken their equal station, acknowledging their independency, and concluding treaties with them as such; when France has actually and avowedly done it; when it is known that Spain must follow, and that Holland will: what hopes can there be, and from what quarter, that they will,

all at once, pull down their own new governments, to receive our provincial ones? That they will dissolve their confederation? That they will disavow all their reasons for taking up arms? And give up all those rights which they have declared, claimed and insisted upon, in order to receive such others at our hands, as supremacy on one hand will, and dependency on the other can admit them to? And how can we hope to conquer when surrounded by his allies, the enemy, who single has repulsed your attacks? France abounds in hardy and gallant warriors, she will inundate with them the plains of America; and then, whether we shall be able, I say not to conquer, but to resist, let each be his own judge.

“ We are in sight of the coasts of France, we see them lined with formidable maritime preparations, and though we may not fear, we ought at least to guard against, an attack upon this very territory, where we are meditating the destruction of America, who combats us, and of France who seconds her. It follows that those soldiers who might have been sent to America, must remain in Great Britain to defend our hallowed laws, our sacred altars, our country itself against the fury of the French. Already the numerous fleet of Brest is perfectly prepared to put to sea; already the coasts of Normandy swarm with troops that seem to menace a descent upon our natal land. And what are we doing in the meantime? We are here deliberating whether it is better to have divers enemies, than one only; whether it is more expedient to encounter at once America and Europe in league for our destruction, than to make head against Europe with the arms of America to back us! But am

I alone in maintaining that the safety of England is attached to the measure I propose? All prudent men profess the same opinion: the unanimous voice of the people repeats it: the pompous but vain declamations of the ministers they have learned to interpret as the denunciations of irreparable calamities to the country. Of this the too certain proof is found, in the fall of the public funds; which took place the moment there was any mention of this new ministerial frenzy, of this obstinacy more Scotch than English. Tell us then, Ministers, sometimes so weakly credulous, at all times so obstinate in your resolutions, if you have easily effected the late loan, and what is the rate of interest you have paid? But you are silent. Will not this then suffice to convince you of the perversity of your measures?

“I know there are some who are careful to give out that the acknowledgement of independence, besides being a measure little to our honour, would offer no certain advantage, since we have no assurance that it would satisfy the Americans. But how can we believe that the Americans will prefer the alliance of France to ours? Are not these the same French who formerly attempted to subjugate them? Are not these the same French whose wishes would have led them to extinguish the name and language of the English? How can it be supposed that the Americans have not yet reflected that England, their bulwark, once prostrated, they will be abandoned, without defence, to the power of France, who will dispose of them as she sees fit? How should they not perceive this artifice of the French, not new, but now prepared and rendered more dangerous by our own imprudence,

which consists in labouring to dissolve our union in order to crush us separately? The Americans will undoubtedly prefer the friendship and alliance of France to dependency: but believe me, when I assure you, that they will like infinitely better the alliance of Great Britain, conjointly with independence. Besides it is a secret to nobody that the Americans are incensed against France for having in this very negotiation profited of their distress, to try to drive a hard and inequitable bargain with them; thus setting a price upon their independence. Let us avail ourselves, if we are wise, of the effects of French avarice, and we may thus make friends of those whom we can no longer have for subjects. Independent of the reasons I have urged, the interest of reciprocal commerce alone, if every other part of the ground be taken equal, would determine the Americans to prefer our friendship to that of France. But why should I multiply arguments to convince you of that, which I can in an instant demonstrate beyond all doubt? I have seen, and read with my own eyes, a letter written by Benjamin Franklin, a man, as you all know, of irrefragable authority with his countrymen. In this letter, transmitted to London since the conclusion of the treaty of alliance between France and America, he affirms that if Great Britain would renounce her supremacy, and treat with the Americans as an independent nation, peace might be re-established immediately. These are not the news and silly reports with which our good ministers allow themselves to be amused by refugees. But if we may count upon the friendship and alliance of independent America, it is equally clear, that instead of



being weakened by the separation, we should become but the more capable of attack, and the more vigorous for defence. For a part of these troops, which are now employed to no effect in our colonies, might then be taken with advantage to form such garrisons in Canada and Nova Scotia, as would put those provinces out of all insult and danger. The rest of the forces there might be employed to protect our islands, and to attack those of France, which, thus taken by surprise, would inevitably fall into our hands. As to the fleet, we could so dispose it as to cover and defend at once all our possessions and our commerce in the two hemispheres. Thus delivered from all disquietude on the part of America, we should be enabled to bend all our thoughts and all our forces against France; and make her pay the forfeit of her insolence and audacity.

“On these considerations, I think that abandoning half measures, we should extend the powers of the commissioners to the enabling them to treat, consult, and finally to agree and acknowledge the Americans as independent; on condition, and in the moment, that they will, as such, form a federal treaty, offensive and defensive and commercial with us. If I am not greatly mistaken we should reap more advantage from this single resolution, than from several victories, in a war become hopeless.

“But if, on the contrary, we persist in our infatuation, we shall learn to our irreparable prejudice, how costly it is to trust more to appearances than reality, and how dangerous to listen to the pernicious counsels of fury and of pride. Be assured, if the commissioners are not empowered to acknowledge inde-

pendence, they had better never go; their going will be a mockery, and end in disgrace."

These considerations, weighty in themselves, and the emphatic manner of the orator, made a deep impression upon the minds of his auditors; it was perceived that several members of the ministerial party began to waver. But the minister of war, Jenkinson, a personage of no little authority, immediately answered by the following speech:

"Nations, no less than individuals, ought to pursue that which is just and honest: and if this be their duty, it is equally also their interest, since it generally conducts them to glory and to greatness. On the other hand, what can be more fatal to the felicity of states, than the uncertainty and instability of counsels?"

"Resolutions always fluctuating, betray in those who govern, either weakness of mind, or timidity of spirit; and prevent them from ever attaining the end proposed. This axiom admitted, I hope to have little difficulty in persuading the house that in the present question, where we see prejudiced men hurried away by vain chimeras, it is as rigorously exacted by justice and our dignity as by the most essential interests of the state, that we should not depart from the counsels we pursue. However fortune may turn her wheel, the war we wage is just. Such the wisdom of parliament has decreed it; such the voice of the people has proclaimed it; such the very nature of things confirms it. Why it has not been more successful, I will not now take upon me to say. Whatever may have been the causes, the want of success, has at last brought upon us the insults and meditated attacks of the French. Is there any one here, who, in such

a situation, would have Great Britain despond, would have her stoop to unworthy resolutions, and through fear of the French, acknowledge herself vanquished by her ancient subjects? But what do I say? There are men who would have us tremble for ourselves; and who imagine they already see the French banners floating at the gates of London. But disregarding the vain terrors of these, I know not whether to say ambitious or timorous men, I pledge myself to demonstrate, that the course we have hitherto pursued is not only that of justice and of honour, but that it is capable of conducting us to the object of our desires.

“ I shall begin with asking these bosom friends of rebels, if they are certain that it is all America, or only a seditious handful, whose craft and audacity have raised them to the head of affairs, who claim independency? For my own part, I confess that this independence appears to me rather a vision that floats in certain brains, inflamed by the rage of innovation, on that side of the Atlantic as well as on this, than any general wish of the people. This is what all men of sense declare, who have resided in the midst of that misguided multitude; this is attested by the thousands of royalists who have flocked to the royal standard in New York, and who have fought for the king in the plains of Saratoga, and on the banks of the Brandywine. This, finally, is proclaimed by the very prisons, crowded with inhabitants, who have chosen rather to part with their liberty, than to renounce their allegiance; and have preferred an imminent peril of death, to a participation in rebellion. If their co-operation has not proved of that utility, which from their number and force wasto have been expect-

ed, this must be imputed not to their indifference, but rather to the inconsiderate zeal which caused them to break out prematurely. There is every reason to think that to such subjects as remained faithful until England set up the pretension of taxation, many others will join themselves now that she has renounced it; for already all are convinced how much better it is to live under the mild sway of an equitable Prince, than under the tyranny of new and ambitious men. And why should I here omit the ties of consanguinity, the common language, the mutual interests, the conformity of manners and the recollection of ancient union? I appeal even to the testimony of my adversary, with regard to the avarice, and revolting behaviour of France, during the negotiation of alliance, and can it be doubtful that to this new, insatiable, arrogant and faithless friend, the Americans will prefer their old, tried, beneficent and affectionate fellow-citizens? Nor should I omit to mention a well known fact; the finances of Congress are exhausted; their soldiers are naked and famishing; they can satisfy none of the wants of the state; creditors are without remedy against their debtors; hence arise scandals without end, private hatreds, and unanimous maledictions against the government.

“ There is not an individual among the Americans, but sees that in accepting the terms offered by Great Britain, the public credit will be re-established, private property secured, and abundance in all parts of the social body restored. They will concur with the more ardour, in establishing this prosperity, when they shall see powerful England resolved on continuing the war with redoubled energy. Certainly they



will not believe that any succours they can receive from haughty France, will compel us very speedily to accept of ignominious conditions. Yes, methinks I already see, or I am strangely mistaken, the people of America flocking to the royal standard; every thing invites them to it; fidelity towards the sovereign, the love of the English name, the hope of a happier future, their aversion to their new and unaccustomed allies, and finally, the hatred they bear to the tyranny of Congress.

“It is then that we shall have cause to applaud our constancy, then shall we acknowledge that the most honourable counsels, as the most worthy of so great a realm, are also the most useful and safe. So far from thinking the new war against France ought to dismay us, I see in it only grounds of better hopes. If up to the present time we have had but little success against the Americans, whatever may have been the cause of it, where is the Englishman who does not hope, nay, who does not firmly believe that the French are about to furnish us with occasions for the most brilliant triumphs. As for myself, I find the pledge of it in the recollection of our past achievements, in the love of our ancient glory, in the present ardour of our troops, and especially in the strength of our navy. The advantages we shall gain over the French by land and sea, will recompense the losses we have sustained in America. The Americans, finding their hopes frustrated, which they had so confidently placed on the efficacy of the succours of their new allies, will be struck with terror; they will prefer the certain peace of an accommodation to future independence, rendered daily more uncertain by new defeats of their

allies. Besides, who will presume to affirm that fortune will not become more propitious to us even upon the territory of America? Is it going too far to believe, that when our armies shall direct their march towards the open and fertile provinces inhabited by the loyalists, they will be more successful than they could be in mountainous, steril, savage regions swarming with rebels? For myself, I have not a particle of doubt that we shall find in Georgia and the Carolinas the most ample indemnification for the unlucky campaigns of New Jersey and of Pennsylvania. But I admit, which God forbid, fresh disasters, I will nevertheless maintain that we ought to prosecute what we have commenced. If we lose our colonies, we shall not lose honour. I would rather American independence, if ever it must exist, should be the offspring of inexorable destiny, than of a base condescendence on our part.

“ Shall France then find us so debonair, as at the bare shadow of her enmity, to abandon our possessions and tamely yield up to her all our glory, we who have the time still green in memory, when, after having by victories on victories trampled upon her pride and prostrated her power, we triumphantly scoured all seas, and the continent of America?

“ Of what country then are the authors of such timid counsels? English perhaps? As for myself I cannot believe it. Who are these pusillanimous spirits, who paint our affairs as if they were desperate? Are they women or affrighted children? I should incline to believe the latter, if I did not see them often holding forth within these walls their sinister predictions, indulging their favourite whim of reviling their

country, expatiating with apparent delight upon its weakness, and magnifying the power of its ambitious enemy. And what is then this France, at the gathering of whose frowns we are to shudder? Where are her seamen trained to naval manœuvres? Where are her soldiers formed in battles? I will tell those who don't know it, or who affect not to know it, that she is at this very moment attacked with an internal malady that will paralyze her strength at the very moment she may wish to move. Who of you is ignorant that she labours under an annual deficiency of thirty millions? Who knows not that she is destitute of the resources of loans? her rich capitalists being as distrustful as they are rare.

“But it is not in the sinking of credit only that France is distressed: the spirit of free enquiry, and the effects of an extended commerce, have introduced opinions among the French people that are wholly incompatible with their government. Contrary to all precedent, contrary to all ideas of that government; a reasoning has propagated and even entered into some of the lines of business, that the *twentieth* is a *free gift*, and that every individual has a right to judge of its necessity, and oversee its employment.

“Besides this; one bad effect of the zeal with which they pretended to take up the American cause, and which they now learn in earnest to have an affection for, has tainted their principles with the spirit of republicanism. These principles of liberty always diminish the force of government; and if they take root and grow up in France, we shall see that government as distracted and unsettled as any other.

“ I hear talk of the difficulty of borrowing among ourselves, and of the depression of the public funds; but the lenders have already come forward; and I understand the first payment is already made. The interest they have demanded is not only not usurious, but it is even much more moderate than our enemies would have wished, or than our croaking orators predicted. As to the fall of the funds, it has been very inconsiderable, and they have even risen to-day. But how shall I treat the grand bug-bear of French invasion? We have a formidable fleet, thirty thousand regular troops; and, at a moment's warning, could muster such a body of militia as would make France desist from, or bitterly rue her projects. It is no such easy task to vanquish Britons; their country falls not a prey so lightly to whomsoever. We are told also that the Americans are ready to contract alliance with us, and that they have manifested such a wish; and we have already seen men credulous enough to catch at the lure. Do we not know that those who agitate these intrigues, if indeed any credit is due to such rumours, are the very same persons who violated the capitulation of Saratoga, the same who imprison, who torture, who massacre the loyal subjects of the king? For my part, I fear the gift and its bearer; I fear American wiles; I fear the French school; I fear they wish to degrade us by the refusal, after having mocked us by their offers. Hitherto I have been considering exclusively what policy demands of you; I will now briefly remind you of the claims of justice, gratitude and humanity. Think of those who in the midst of the rage of rebellion have preserved their fidelity to the king, to yourselves, to the country.



Have compassion for those who have placed all their hopes in your constancy.

“Take pity on the wives, on the widows, on the children of those, who, now exposed without defence to the fury of the insurgents, offer up their prayers to heaven for the prosperity of your arms, and see no glimpse of any period to their torments but in your victory. Will you abandon all these; will you allow them to become the victims of the confidence they placed in you? Will the English show less perseverance in their own cause, than the loyalists have manifested on their behalf? Ah! such abominable counsels were never yet embraced by this generous kingdom. Already, methinks, I see your noble bosoms pant with indignation; already I hear your voices cry vengeance on outrages so unexampled, while your hands grasp the arms which are about to inflict it. On, then, ye fathers of the state! accomplish the high destiny that awaits you. Save the honour of the kingdom, succour the unfortunate, protect the faithful, defend the country. Let Europe acknowledge, and France prove to her cost, that it is pure British blood which still flows in your veins. To condense therefore in a few words what I feel and what I think, I move that, the proposition of my adversary being rejected, the king be assured that his faithful commons are ready to furnish him with the means that shall be necessary to maintain the honour of his people and the dignity of his crown.”

As soon as Jenkinson had finished speaking, there followed an incredible agitation in the house. At length the votes were taken, and it was carried almost unanimously, that an address of thanks should be

presented to the king, that war should be continued against the colonies, and declared against France.

But, in the sitting of the house of lords of the seventh of April, after the duke of Richmond had concluded a very solid and very eloquent speech, proving that it was time to give another direction to the affairs of the kingdom, that house became the scene of a melancholy event. The Earl of Chatham, though sinking under a mortal infirmity, had dragged himself to his place in parliament. Shocked at the new measures that were thrown out there, and determined not to consent to the separation of America, he pronounced these words, which were the last of his life: "I have made an effort almost beyond the powers of my constitution to come down to the house on this day, to express the indignation I feel at an idea which I understand has been proposed to you, of yielding up the sovereignty of America!

"My lords, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy! Pressed down, as I am, by the hand of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my lords, while I have sense and memory, I will never consent to deprive the royal offspring of the house of Brunswick, the heirs of the princess Sophia, *of their fairest inheritance.*

"Where is the man that will dare to advise such a measure? His majesty succeeded to an empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Shall we tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions? Shall

this great kingdom, that has survived whole and entire the Danish depredations, the Scottish inroads, and the Norman conquest; that has stood the threatened invasion of the Spanish Armada, now fall prostrate before the house of Bourbon? Surely, my lords, this nation is no longer what it was! Shall a people that seventeen years ago was the terror of the world, now stoop so low as to tell its ancient inveterate enemy: take all we have, only give us peace? It is impossible! In God's name, if it is absolutely necessary to declare either for peace or war, and the former cannot be preserved with honour, why is not the latter commenced without hesitation? I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom; but I trust it has still sufficient to maintain its just rights. But, my lords, any state is better than despair. Let us at least make one effort; and if we must fall, let us fall like men!"

Here the Earl of Chatham ended his speech. The Duke of Richmond rose, and endeavoured to prove that the conquest of America by force of arms, was become impracticable; that consequently it was wiser to secure her friendship by a treaty of alliance, than to throw her into the arms of France. The Earl of Chatham wished to reply, but after two or three unsuccessful attempts to stand, he fell down in a swoon on his seat. He was immediately assisted by the duke of Cumberland, and several other principal members of the house. They removed him into an adjacent apartment, called the Prince's Chamber. The confusion and disorder became extreme. The duke of Richmond proposed, that in consideration of this public calamity, the house should adjourn

to the following day; and it was accordingly done. The next day the debate was resumed upon the motion of the duke of Richmond; but it was finally rejected by a large majority.

The eleventh of May, was the last day of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham; he was in his seventieth year. His obsequies were celebrated the eighth of June, with extraordinary pomp, in Westminster Abbey; where a monument was erected to him a short time after. This man, whether for his genius, his virtues, or the great things he did for his country, is rather to be paralleled with the ancients than preferred to the moderns. He governed for a considerable time the opulent kingdom of Great Britain: he raised it to such a pitch of splendour, as the English at no other period had ever known, or even presumed to hope for; and he died, if not in poverty, at least with so narrow a fortune, that it would not have been sufficient to maintain his family honourably; a thing at that time sufficiently remarkable, and which in the present age might pass for a prodigy! But his grateful country recompensed in the children the virtue of the father. The parliament granted a perpetual annuity of four thousand pounds sterling to the family of Chatham, besides paying twenty thousand pounds of debts which the late Earl had been compelled to contract, in order to support his rank and his numerous household. No individual until that time, except the duke of Marlborough, had received in England such high and liberal rewards. The Earl of Chatham was no less distinguished as a great orator, than as a profound statesman, and immaculate citizen. He defended with admirable eloquence before parlia-



ment, those resolutions which he had maturely discussed and firmly adopted in the consultations of the cabinet. Some, it is true, blamed in his speeches the too frequent use of figures, and a certain pomp of style much savouring of the taste of those times. But this great minister surpassed all the rulers of nations of his age, in the art of exciting, even to enthusiasm, the zeal of the servants of the state, civil as well as military: a talent which heaven confers but rarely, and only upon privileged individuals. In a word, he was a man whose name will never be pronounced without encomium, and the resplendent glory of whose virtues will eternally recommend them to imitation.

We now resume the thread of events: The British ministers, seeing that war with France was become inevitable, took all the measures they judged necessary to sustain it. They exerted themselves therein with the more ardour, as they could not but perceive, that if England showed herself with disadvantage in this contest against France and America, Spain, and perhaps even Holland, would not long remain neuter; whereas, on the other hand, a prompt and brilliant victory might intimidate the two latter powers from declaring themselves. Their attention was occupied especially in pressing their maritime preparations, as therein consisted the principal defence of the kingdom, and the pledge of success. But on a strict examination into the state of the navy, it was found to be neither so numerous, nor so well provided, as had been supposed, and as the urgency of circumstances required. This afflicting discovery excited a general clamour. In the two houses of parliament, the duke of Bolton and Fox inveighed

with great asperity against the earl of Sandwich, who was first lord of the admiralty. No diligence, however, was omitted to remedy all deficiencies. To cheer the public mind in so trying a conjuncture, and especially to inspirit the seamen, by giving them a chief possessed of their full confidence, the ministers appointed to the command of the fleet lying at Portsmouth, admiral Keppel, an officer of distinguished ability, and highly celebrated for his brilliant achievements in the preceding wars. Lords Hawks and Anson, those two bright luminaries of the British marine, had honoured him with their esteem and closest friendship: in a word, no choice could have been so agreeable to the British nation at large as that of admiral Keppel. He refused not the appointment, notwithstanding that he was already arrived at an age in which man prefers repose to action, and that he could aspire to no greater glory than what he had acquired: he must even have felt a sort of repugnance to commit it anew to the hazard of battles. To these considerations was added another untoward particular, which was, that, as a whig, the ministers eyed him with jealousy; a circumstance which, in the course of events, might occasion him many disgusts. But more thoughtful for the good of his country, which claimed his services, than of his private convenience, he hesitated not to accept the charge, to which he was invited by the public voice. The vice admirals, Harland and Palliser, both officers of high reputation, were appointed to second him in command. On his arrival at Portsmouth, Keppel, instead of a great fleet ready to proceed to sea, found, to his extreme surprise, only six sail of the line prepared for imme-

diate service, crews incomplete, provisions insufficient, and naval munitions wanting. The ministers alleged that the other ships had been detached on different services, but that they were to return shortly. However it was, the admiral exerted an activity so astonishing, that by the middle of June he found himself in condition to put to sea with twenty ships of the line, and not without expectation of prompt reinforcements. He sailed from St. Helens on the thirteenth, accompanied by the fervent prayers of all England. The posture of affairs was inexpressibly critical and alarming. It was known that France had a numerous fleet at Brest, completely manned and equipped for sea: the ships which conveyed the riches of India were expected from day to day, and might become the prey of the French. This disaster, so great in itself, by the loss of such treasures, must have involved another of still greater consequence, that of an immense number of sailors, who were counted upon to man the ships of war. To this momentous consideration, were joined the defence of the vast extent of the British coasts, the safety of the capital itself, the preservation of the arsenals, the repositories of all the elements of the greatness of England, and the basis of all her hopes: and all these objects, rather of vital than of great importance, were confided to the protection of twenty ships!

Meanwhile, the land preparations were pushed with no less ardour than the maritime. The recruiting service was prosecuted with success: the militia were assembled, and formed into regiments upon the model of regular troops. Encampments were established in such places as were thought most exposed

to the attempts of the enemy. Thus the English made their dispositions to meet the impending war. The government had already ordered, by way of reprisal, the detention of all the French vessels that were found in the ports.

But France, who for a long time had purposed to turn her arms against England, was better provided with all the implements of war. Her fleet was numerous, and all her arsenals were in full activity. The court of Versailles, on intelligence of the hostile manner with which king George had answered the declaration of the Marquis de Noailles, immediately despatched orders to the different ports, prohibiting the departure of all English vessels. This measure, taken reciprocally by the two powers, produced but little effect: the masters of merchant vessels, foreseeing a rupture, had hastened to recover their own shores. France henceforth, laying aside all hesitations, felt it due to herself to assume the attitude which becomes a great and powerful nation. She was disposed to perfect the work commenced by her declaration, and to re-assure the minds of her new allies by a step from which it was impossible to fall back without shame. She therefore resolved to receive, and formally acknowledge, the American commissioners, as ambassadors of a free and independent nation. How England must have been stung by this affront, it is not difficult to imagine.

On the twenty-first of March, the three commissioners were introduced by the count de Vergennes before the throne, whereon was seated the king, Lewis XVI. in the midst of the *grandees* of his court. In this ceremony, none of those formalities were omit-



ted which it was usual to observe, whenever the kings of France gave audience to the ambassadors of sovereign and independent nations: a truly remarkable event, and such as history, perhaps, affords no example of! The Americans herein experienced better fortune than other nations that have acquired independence; as, for example, the Switzers and Dutch, who were not without difficulty, nor till after a long time, acknowledged independent by those very powers that had assisted them to break the yoke of their masters.

France, having thus dropped the mask, could not but perceive that in the present war she must depend more upon her fleets than upon her armies. She was not unmindful, that an essential part of maritime war consists in capturing, as well the armed ships of the enemy, to diminish his power, as those of commerce, to exhaust his resources; an object always of primary importance, but most especially such in a war with England. The court of Versailles accordingly determined to employ an incentive that should stimulate the ardour of both officers and crews. It had been usual in France, in order to encourage the armaments on cruise, to grant certain recompenses to the captors of ships of war; and to those of merchant vessels, one third of the product of their sale. The king, by a decree of the twenty-eighth of March, ordained that the enemy ships of war and cruisers, which should be taken by his own, should belong in full and entire property to the commanders, officers and crews, who should have captured them; and that, in like manner, two thirds of the value of merchant ships and of their cargoes, should become the

property of the captors; the other third, being reserved, to be deposited in the fund destined for the relief of invalid seamen. This decree, signed by the king, and countersigned by the duke de Penthièvre, grand-admiral of France, was to have been put in execution the fourth of the following May: nevertheless, whether Lewis XVI. as some think, swayed by the natural benignity of his character, was reluctant to give the signal for the effusion of blood, or that policy disposed him to wait till the English should have committed the first hostilities, the edict was not published and executed until the beginning of July.

With a view to prevent the English government, fearing for itself, from being able to send re-enforcements to America, regiments were ordered to march from all parts of France upon the coasts that look towards England. Already a formidable army was found assembled, and ready, in all appearance, to be embarked on board the grand armament at Brest, for a descent upon the opposite shore. All the labours of that port were pushed with unexampled activity; more than thirty ships of the line were already completely equipped there, besides a great number of frigates; the latter were particularly intended for cruising against the British commerce. Another considerable fleet was about to put to sea from the port of Toulon.

This sudden resurrection of the French marine was the subject of extreme surprise to all nations, and particularly to England, who, accustomed to domineer upon the ocean, scarcely knew how to believe that there should thus all at once have risen up a power in condition to contend with her for the scepter.

tre of the seas. In truth, the state of debility into which France had fallen at the epoch of the death of Lewis XIV. not only rendered it impossible to remedy the weakness in which the French navy was left at the conclusion of the war of the Spanish succession, but it even occasioned those ships which remained to perish in the docks for want of repairs. The wars of Italy, of Flanders and of Germany, which took place under the reign of Lewis XV. by drawing all the efforts and all the resources of the state to the land service, produced a fatal coldness towards the marine department. France contented herself with arming a few ships, rather to protect her own commerce, than to disturb that of the enemy; hence disastrous defeats, and losses without number. To all these causes was joined the opinion natural to the inhabitants of France, satisfied with the fertility of their lands, and the multitude of their manufactures, that they have little need of a strong navy and of maritime traffic. But finally the increase of the products of their colonies, and the immense gain they derived from the sale of them in foreign markets, drew the attention of the French to the importance of external commerce.

They perceived, at the same time, that without a military marine to protect the mercantile, maritime commerce must always be uncertain, and consequently sickly and unprofitable; and that war may destroy, in a few days, the fruits of a long peace. On these considerations, the court of France devoted its cares to the creation and maintenance of a fleet sufficiently formidable to command respect during peace, or to

make war with success, and protect commerce from the insults of enemy vessels.

The present American war, which opened so brilliant a perspective to the French, furnished also a powerful incentive to these new designs. In order not to want skilful officers to manage the ships, the seamen of the merchant shipping, in imitation of the example of the English and Dutch, were called into the service of the royal navy. Besides this, in pursuance of a well conceived plan, there were sent out in the years 1772, 1775 and 1776 three fleets, commanded by three excellent seamen, the Counts d'Orvilliers, De Guichen and Duchaffault. These excursions served as schools of practice, in which the officers and crews formed themselves to evolutions and manœuvres. In brief, the efforts of the French government were so unremitting, and it was so seconded by the general ardour, that at the commencement of the present war its navy equalled, if it did not surpass that of England; speaking, however, of the fleets which the latter had then fitted for immediate service, or in such forwardness that they could put to sea within a short space of time. Nor was France disposed to keep this navy idle in her ports. The cabinet of Versailles meditated two expeditions equally important; the one was to be executed by the armament at Brest, the other by the fleet of Toulon. The latter, putting to sea as soon as possible, was to repair with all celerity to America, and suddenly to make its appearance in the waters of the Delaware.

Hence two events were likely to result, equally pernicious to Great Britain; namely, that the squadron



of Lord Howe, which had gone up that river, and which was greatly inferior in force to that of France, would, without any doubt, have been destroyed, or must have fallen into the power of the French. That squadron annihilated or taken, the army under general Clinton, pressed in front by Washington, and in rear by the French fleet thus possessed of the Delaware, would also have been constrained to surrender, or, certainly, would have had an extremely perilous retreat. So decisive a blow must have put an end to the whole American war. This plan of campaign had been debated and agreed upon at Paris, between the commissioners of Congress and the ministry. Nor was the execution of it delayed; on the thirteenth of April the French fleet sailed from Toulon. It was composed of twelve sail of the line, and four large frigates, and commanded by the Count d'Estaing, a man of great valour, and of an active genius. It took out a considerable corps of troops to serve on shore. Silas Deane, one of the American commissioners, who was recalled, and M. Gerard, whom the king had appointed his minister to the United States, were on board. Fortune showed herself favourable to these first essays. The wind seconded the voyage of the fleet; and, though the British ministry had been promptly advised of its departure, their ignorance of the route taken by the Count d'Estaing, and the strong west winds which prevailed for some days, so retarded the decisions of the admiralty, that it was not till the first of June they ordered admiral Byron to make sail with twelve ships for America; he was to replace lord Howe, who had requested leave to return to England. As for the fleet of Brest, more conside-

nable, and commanded by the Count d'Orvilliers, who was impatient to realize the hopes which had been placed in his talents, it was destined to scour the seas of Europe in order to keep alive upon the coasts of Great Britain the fear of an invasion. He relied especially upon his frigates, which were very numerous, to intercept the merchant fleets laden with rich cargoes, which the English then expected from the two Indies. Thus things were rapidly verging to an open rupture between the two states, and immediate hostilities were expected, though war was not yet declared on either part, according to the established usages of Europe. Universal attention was roused by the contest going to commence between France and England: events of moment were expected from the collision of two such powerful nations. Nor was fortune slow to light the first fires of this conflagration, which soon involved the four quarters of the world in its flames. Scarcely had Admiral Keppel got out to sea, the thirteenth of June, from St. Helen's, and shaped his course for the Bay of Biscay, when he discovered, at no great distance, two ships of considerable size, with two other smaller vessels, which appeared to be watching the motions of his fleet. These were the two French frigates called the *Licorne* and the *Belle-Poule*. The admiral found himself in a very delicate situation. On the one hand, he desired much to make himself master of the ships, in order to procure information respecting the state and position of the Brest fleet; on the other, war was not yet declared between the two nations, and the causing it to break out might be imputed to his temerity. Nor did he find any thing in

the instructions of the ministers which could remove his perplexity; as they were exceedingly loose, and left every thing almost entirely to his discretion. It should be added, that, Keppel being of a party in opposition to that of the ministers, his conduct, in case he commenced hostilities, was liable to be interpreted unfavourably, since his adversaries might attribute to political motives what appeared to be the inevitable result of circumstances. In this painful embarrassment, Keppel, like the good citizen he was, chose rather to serve his country at his own peril, than to hazard its interests by his indecision. Accordingly, the seventeenth of June, he ordered his ships to give chase to the French. Between five and six in the afternoon, the English frigate *Milford* came up with the *Licorne*, and her captain, in very civil terms, summoned the French commander to repair under the stern of admiral Keppel. The Frenchman at first refused: but seeing the *Hector* ship of the line come up, which saluted with ball, he submitted to his destiny, and following that vessel, took station in the British fleet.

During this time, captain Marshall, with his frigate *Arethusa*, of twenty-eight six pounders, in company with the *Alert* cutter, was in pursuit of the *Belle-Poule*, which carried twenty-six twelve pounders and was accompanied by a corvette of ten guns.

The *Arethusa* being the better sailer, arrived about six in the evening within musket shot of the *Belle-Poule*. Marshall informed the French captain, M. de la Clocheterie, of his orders to bring him under the stern of the admiral. To this, de la Clocheterie returned a spirited refusal. The *Arethusa* then fired a

shot across the Belle-Poule, which she returned with a discharge of her broadside. A fierce engagement between the two frigates ensued, animated by an equal emulation, and bent on carrying the victory in this first action, the most extraordinary efforts of resolution were displayed on both sides. The conflict continued for more than two hours, with severe damage to both parties, as the sea was calm, and the vessels extremely near. The French were superior in the weight of metal, the number of their crew, and the proximity of their coasts; while the English were benefited by the number of guns, and especially, by the presence of two ships of the line, the Valiant and the Monarch; which, though prevented by the calm from coming up to take part in the action, nevertheless greatly disquieted the French captain, and exceedingly circumscribed his movements. Finally, after an obstinate contest, the English frigate finding herself too close upon the coasts of France, despairing of being able to overpower her adversary, and having sustained much injury in her masts, spars and rigging, profited of a light breeze, which sprung up at that moment, to withdraw. She was afterwards towed off to the fleet by the Valiant and Monarch. During her retreat, the French saluted her with fifty balls; but she returned them not one. The Belle-Poule would even have pursued her, but for the damage she had received herself, besides, the proximity of the two men of war, and even of the whole English armament.

La Clocheterie thinking it more prudent to consult his safety, went to cast anchor for the night in the midst of the shoals, near Plouascat. The next morning, the two English ships came to reconnoitre his



position, and ascertain whether it was possible to approach the frigate near enough to take her. But finding the obstacles of the rocks insuperable, they abandoned the enterprise and returned to join the fleet. For the same causes, and at the same time, the English cutter and the French corvette joined battle with equal fury, but with different success. After an hour of the most vigorous resistance, the corvette surrendered. The *Arethusa*, in this action, had eight men killed and thirty-six wounded. The loss of the *Belle-Poule* was forty killed, and fifty-seven wounded. Among the first was M. de St. Marsault, lieutenant of the frigate; among the second M. de la Roche de Kerandraon, ensign; Bouvet, an auxiliary officer, and M. de la Clocheterie himself, who received two contusions.

In the morning of the eighteenth, the frigate *Licorne*, which had been stationed in the middle of the English fleet, having made a movement which gave the English some suspicion, they fired a shot across her way as a signal to keep in company with the other ships. Immediately, to the great astonishment of the admiral, and of the whole English fleet, she discharged a broadside and a volley of musketry into the *America*, of sixty-four guns, commanded by Lord Longford, which lay the nearest to her. This done, she struck her colours, as if, tired of this middle state between peace and war in which she was kept, she had preferred, though a prisoner, to constitute herself in open war. Keppel sent her to Plymouth. In the meantime, another French frigate, named the *Pallas*, fell in with the English fleet; the admiral detained her, changing her officers and crew. Such was his

conduct with regard to French vessels of war. As to merchant ships, though a great number of them fell within his reach, he permitted them to continue their voyage without interruption, not thinking himself authorized to stop them.

The action of the *Belle-Poule* excited no little enthusiasm in France, where the remembrance of so many defeats was still recent: and it is unquestionable that the officers and all the crew of that frigate had signalized as much valour as nautical ability. Their conduct occasioned a sincere joy, and it was diligently extolled, in order to animate the public mind by these brilliant beginnings. The king showed himself lavish of favours towards those who had fought: he appointed M. de la Clocheterie captain of ship; Bouvet, lieutenant of frigate; and gave the cross of Saint Lewis to Roche-Kerandraon. Pensions were granted to the sister of Saint Marsault, to the widows, and to the children of those who had fallen in the action. The English were not so generous towards captains Marshall, and Fairfax, commander of the Cutter: but they received the encomiums of the admiralty and of their fellow citizens.

But the king of France, considering the affair of the *Belle-Poule*, and the seizure of other frigates, as a sufficient motive for executing his projects, ordered reprisals against the vessels of Great Britain. He immediately caused to be published his decree concerning prizes, as if the sending of the count d'Estaing to America, with such orders as he was the bearer of, was not yet to be reputed a commencement of war. The English went through the same formalities, thus authorizing by words what they had

already done, at least with regard to ships of war. Until this time, the two parties had endeavoured to harm each other by all possible means, without resorting to the accustomed declarations.

The papers found aboard the French frigates, and the questions put to the prisoners, furnished admiral Keppel with important intelligence. He learned that in the port of Brest were thirty-two ships of the line, with ten or twelve frigates, all in complete readiness to put to sea; whereas all his own force consisted in twenty sail of the line and three frigates. He found himself already in sight of the isle of Ouessant, and consequently near the coasts of France. His position was truly embarrassing. The proximity and superiority of the enemy rendered his present station imminently perilous. To encounter the hazards of a battle which might expose the safety of the kingdom, was rather an act of temerity, than a courageous resolution. On the other hand, to retire from the coasts of an enemy he had braved, a moment since, appeared to him a step too unworthy of his own reputation, and of the English name. But, finally, consulting utility more than appearances, and his duty rather than the point of honour, he tacked about for England, and entered Portsmouth the twenty-seventh of June.

Immediately, some from the spirit of party, and in order to exculpate the ministers, others to appease the national pride, pulled him to pieces without mercy. It might have seemed that his retreat had sullied the glory of England; and some were so transported by their fury as to compare Keppel to Byng. The admiral supported with admirable constancy the outrages of the multitude, and the invectives of the party

who excited them. He busied himself only with the means of re-enforcing his fleet, and of putting it in condition to scour the seas anew; the admiralty powerfully seconded his zeal, and the success corresponded to his exertions. The first divisions of the East and West India fleets arrived about that time, and furnished a great number of excellent seamen to the naval armament. Thus re-enforced it weighed anchor and put to sea the ninth of July. It was composed of twenty-four ships of the line, which were afterwards joined by six others of the same class. It comprehended a ship of one hundred guns, named the *Victory*, which bore the admiral's flag, six of ninety, one of eighty, and fifteen of seventy-four; the rest were of sixty-four.

They were all well manned and equipped, and commanded by excellent officers. The frigates were insufficient in number: there were only five or six, with two fire ships. The fleet was divided into three squadrons; the van was commanded by Sir Robert Harland, vice admiral of the Red; the centre by admiral Keppel, assisted by admiral Campbell, a consummate seaman, who, on the score of ancient friendship, had chosen to accompany him as the first captain of the *Victory*. The rear was conducted by Sir Hugh Palliser, vice-admiral of the Blue, and one of the members of the board of admiralty. Finding themselves so strong, and no longer doubting of victory, the English made their appearance upon the coasts of France.

They sought the French fleet with all diligence, impatient to give it battle, in order to preserve their commerce, to efface the dishonour of having a few



days before yielded the sea to the enemy; finally, to sustain their ancient renown, and to cause fortune to incline in their favour from the very commencement of hostilities. Meanwhile, the French fleet had also come out of port the eighth of July. It was in like manner formed in three divisions; the first commanded by the Count Duchaffault, the centre by the Count d' Orvilliers, Captain General, and the third by the duke de Chartres, prince of the blood, who was seconded and guided by Admiral de la Motte-Piquet. These three divisions comprised thirty-two sail of the line, among which were the admiral's ship, *La Bretagne*, of one hundred and ten guns, *la Ville de Paris*, of ninety, which carried the Count de Guichen; two of eighty, twelve of seventy-four, one of seventy, two of sixty-four, one of sixty, and two of fifty, besides a great number of frigates. It was the intention of the Count D' Orvilliers not to come to an engagement except with great probabilities of success; and this by no means for want of an intrepid valour, and of a perfect knowledge of naval tactics; but he chose first to exercise his crews thoroughly. He hoped, also, without exposing himself to the hazards of an action, to give England some severe blows, by employing his light vessels to capture the convoys which she daily expected from the two Indies. He shaped his course for the Isle of Ouessant, in the full persuasion that the British fleet, which he supposed to consist but of twenty sail of the line, would not presume to venture out of port, or, if it showed itself, that he should certainly defeat, or disperse it, and that, in all events, he should acquire the dominion of the sea. Fortune appeared to favour these first efforts; scarce-

ly had he quitted the road of Brest, when he discovered the English frigate, the *Lively*, which admiral Kepple had detached upon discovery: he ordered her to be chased, and she was soon taken. The entire world was attentive to what might ensue, on seeing the two most potent nations of Europe marshalled the one against the other, on the ocean. To this object, and not in vain, had the government of France aimed all its calculations for several years back. Its ships were completely equipped, its seamen well-trained, its captains excellent. It remained, only that fortune should smile upon such magnanimous designs. The two fleets came in sight of each other in the evening of the twenty-third of July, the isle of Ouessant being thirty leagues distant, and the wind at west. The Count D'Orvilliers, believing the enemy weaker than he was in reality, desired impatiently to bring him to action. But on approaching the British fleet, and finding it nearly as strong as his own, he avoided an engagement no less cautiously than he had eagerly sought it at first. As he had the advantage of the wind, it was impossible for the English to force him to it, against his will. During the night, two French ships were driven by the force of the wind to the leeward of the British fleet. Admiral Keppel having perceived it in the morning, made signal to give chase and cut them off from the main body of their fleet. He hoped that in order to save them, the French admiral would give him battle, or at least that these ships would be taken, or so forced out of their course that it would be impossible for them to rejoin their fleet. The Count D'Orvilliers preferred not to make any movement to succour them: and thus the two

vessels, though they had the good fortune to escape the English, were chased so far, that they could take no part in the events which followed.

During the four following days the two fleets remained in sight; the British admiral endeavouring all the time to get the wind, or to beat up so near the French fleet as to force it to action. But to arrive at this object, it was impossible to maintain the disposition entire; and therefore Keppel had commanded that the ships should take rank according to their swiftness, as they gained to the windward, with attention, however, to keep their distances as much as possible. This movement was also necessary, in order not to lose sight of the enemy. But it was not without danger, since it might offer the French an occasion to fall suddenly with superior force upon some one of the English ships. It was also the cause, that on the twenty-seventh, the day of battle, the French fleet was formed in better order than that of England, which appeared deranged. On the morning of that day, the wind continuing from the west, and favouring the French, the two fleets were separated, one from the other, a distance of only three leagues, in such manner, however, that the English rear found itself a little more to the leeward than the centre and van. Keppel therefore ordered Palliser, who commanded it, to press up to the windward in order to form in a line with the two other divisions of the fleet. Palliser executed the orders of the admiral. This movement induced the count D'Orvilliers, to believe, and perhaps not without reason, as Palliser continued to crowd more and more to the windward, that it was the intention of the enemy to attack the

French rear, and to gain on the opposite tack the weather gage of that division. To defeat this manœuvre, he directly put his ships about, and reversing his order of battle, his rear became van. This very movement, together with some variations in the wind, of which the English dexterously availed themselves, brought the two fleets so near each other, that the action commenced immediately, the wind blowing from the west, and the French running from north to south, the English from south to north. This manner of combating, by which a close and stationary action was avoided, the ships firing only as they passed each other in opposite directions, was the result of the manœuvre just made by the French fleet.

It suited the count D' Orvilliers so much the better, as since he had not been able to decline the engagement, it assured him, at least, that it could not be decisive. For it was a necessary consequence of this order of battle, that the two fleets must break their line during the action, and that the party who should have sustained the least damage, could not immediately pursue their advantages, whether against any particular ship of the enemy; or against his entire fleet. The two fleets thus standing on opposite tacks, and but a slight distance apart, the first ships of the English van, and those of the French rear, which, as we have said, was become the van, began to exchange broadsides, and the battle was joined successively, as the whole English line passed close along side of the whole French line; so that the rear, commanded by Sir Hugh Palliser, and the van by the count Duchaffault, were the last to attack each other. The effects of this collision were very destructive on



both sides; but as the French, according to their custom, had fired at the tackling, and the English, as they usually do, at the body of the ships, the hulls of the French vessels were more severely damaged, than those of their enemies; whereas, the English were much the greatest sufferers in their masts, yards and rigging. The French, profiting of this advantage of their sails, soon tacked and formed their line anew. The British van and centre also in a short time recovered their stations, though the admiral's ship had suffered extremely. But the ships of Palliser and several others, not only had not yet tacked, but being in a disabled condition, they obeyed the wind and fell rapidly to leeward. In this state of things, whether the count D'Orvilliers intended, as the English pretend, to cut their line, and separate these ships from the rest of the fleet, or, as the French affirm, wishing to place himself under the wind, in order, as he expected a second battle, to deprive the English of the advantage he would thus gain for himself, of using the lower batteries with effect, he made signals for all his fleet to advance by a successive movement, and penetrate between the ships of Keppel and those of Palliser.

The English admiral, perceiving the design of his adversary, immediately put his ships about, and stood athwart the enemy's foremost division, directing at the same time Sir Robert Harland to form his division in a line astern, in order to face the enemy, till Sir Hugh Palliser could bring up his ships. It is not clear, whether this movement of Keppel frustrated the project of the count d'Orvilliers, for intercepting Palliser's division, or whether it was merely the in-

tention of that admiral to get under the wind; but certain it is, that in consequence of this evolution the English remained to the windward. It was therefore in their power to renew the battle, provided, however, that all their ships had been in condition to take part in the action; and this would have been the wish of Keppel. But the squadron of Palliser, since the Admiral and Harland had thrown themselves between him and the French, to whom they were now very near, found itself to the windward of the other divisions, and of course, remote from the French fleet, and little within reach to be of any assistance in case of a new engagement. On this consideration, Keppel made a signal for all the ships to the windward to resume their respective posts in the order of battle. Here a mistake happened, which prevented the execution of his orders. Palliser's ship, the *Formidable*, not having repeated the signal, the captains of the other ships understood that of Keppel as an order to rally in the wake of the commander of their own division, which they did accordingly.

Meanwhile, the French continued drawn up, to leeward, in order of battle. Keppel renewed the same signal, but with no better success. Afterwards, about five in the evening, [Palliser says at seven,] he commanded the captain of the frigate, *Fox*, to convey to Palliser a verbal message of the same import as the order he had already intimated by signals. It was still in vain: neither the *Formidable* nor the other ships obeyed. On seeing this, and the day far spent, Keppel made the signal to each of the ships of Palliser to resume their stations in the line; excepting, however, the *Formidable*, apparently from a certain

regard to the rank, and particular functions of the vice admiral. This time, his orders were executed; but night came, and put an end to all possibility of further operations against the enemy.

Such are the causes which prevented admiral Keppel from renewing the battle; whether the disobedience of Palliser proceeded from the impossibility of managing his ships, disabled in the engagement, as seems probable, and as the court martial decided, in the solemn trial which followed, or that it was owing to any personal pique of that officer, who, being of the ministerial party, was politically at variance with Keppel. Be this as it may, the French thence took occasion to say, that from noon till night they offered battle to Keppel, who would not accept it. The fact in itself is incontestable; but as to the intentions of the British admiral, it is certain that he was well disposed to re-commence the action, but was prevented by the obstacles we have just related.

Satisfied with their conduct in this combat, and with its issue, which might be represented as a victory, a thing so important at this first epoch of the war, or finding the condition of their fleet too shattered to warrant their exposing themselves to the hazards of a second battle, the French profited in the night of a fair wind to recover their own coasts; and entered the next day with full sails into the port of Brest. They had, however, left in the place of battle, three ships with lights at the mast heads, to deceive the English into the belief that all their fleet was still there. At break of day, the French fleet was already at such a distance that it was only discernible from the mast heads of the largest ships in the British

fleet; nothing remained in sight but the three vessels above mentioned. Keppel ordered the *Prince George*, the *Robust*, and another ship, to give them chase, but as they were good sailors, and the English had suffered extremely in their sails and rigging, this pursuit was fruitless. Admiral Keppel made the best of his way to Plymouth, where he purposed to repair the damages of his fleet; he left, however, some ships that had suffered the least, to protect the British trade, and especially the fleets which were expected.

The English, in this action, had one hundred and forty killed, and about four hundred wounded. The loss of the French is uncertain; but it is probable that it exceeded that of the English. Some private authorities lead to this belief, as also the throng of sailors and marines with which they are accustomed to fill their vessels.

The two fleets proceeded again to sea the next month. But whether they mutually sought to meet each other, as they gave out, or that each endeavoured to avoid the other, as it was reciprocally asserted, it is certain that they did not meet again. It is equally indisputable, that the trade of England was effectually protected; while, on the other hand, an immense number of French vessels with rich and valuable cargoes, fell into the power of the enemy. These losses excited the complaints of the cities of Bordeaux, Nantes, Saint-Malo, and Havre de Grace.

Such was the issue of the battle of Ouessant, which commenced the European war. The English observed in it, to their great surprise, that the French not only fought with their accustomed valour, but that they displayed also no ordinary dexterity in pro-



fitting of the advantage of wind, in the management of their ships, and in their naval evolutions. Hence they could not but infer, that if they obtained successes in the present war, they would have to pay dearer for them than in the last.

Public rejoicings were made in France, to animate the people, and inspire them with better hopes. The impression was quite different in England; some complained of Keppel, others of Palliser, according to the various humours of the parties; all of fortune. After certain warm discussions, the admiral and vice admiral were both put upon trial; but both were acquitted: the first, to the universal exultation of the people; the second to the particular gratification of the friends of the ministry.

END OF BOOK NINTH.



## BOOK TENTH.

1778.

THE unfortunate issue of the war of Canada, and the inutility of the advantages obtained in the campaign of Pennsylvania, had at length shaken the obstinacy of the British ministers. They began to believe that it was impossible to reduce the Americans by force of arms; and every day confirmed them in this persuasion, since France, so powerful by land and by sea, had united her forces to those of the Congress. It was too manifest to be doubted, that if the Americans had been able to withstand, in the preceding campaign, the utmost efforts of England, it would be infinitely more easy for them to resist in future: their union being more consolidated by time, their hopes secured by propitious fortune, and their arms seconded by those of a formidable potentate. Besides, it was no longer to be hoped that as many troops could be sent to America in future years as had been sent thither in the past. For, without reference to the almost absolute impossibility of procuring more German troops, and the extreme slowness of recruiting in England, there was to be feared an invasion of the French, in the very heart of the kingdom, and, moreover, it was necessary to throw strong garrisons into the West India islands, to shelter them from the assaults of the French, who were known to have a respectable force in their vicinity. It was no

mystery in the British cabinet, that the principal object which the French were aiming at in the present war, after the separation of America from Great Britain, was the conquest of the rich colonies of England in the West Indies; and that in anticipation of events, they had assembled numerous troops in their own possessions. The English islands of the West Indies thus found themselves exposed, almost without defence, to the attempts of the enemy. Whether the ministers had believed that war with France was not likely to break out immediately, or that they had relied upon their sanguine hopes of a complete triumph in the preceding campaign, they had flattered themselves that in any event, their victories upon the American continent would enable them to pass into their islands in good time, all the succours that could be necessary. *Jealousy* was also entertained of Canada, not only on the part of the Americans, but also, and much more, on that of the French; for the Canadians were more French than English, and the memory of their origin appeared to be still dear to them. It was therefore necessary to leave in that province such garrisons as could answer for it. These various considerations, not only rendered it impracticable to re-enforce the armies which acted against the United States; but even imposed the necessity of weakening them by detachments for the different exigencies of the service. But, on the other hand, the courage of the ministers did not desert them. They hoped that offers of accommodation, a new mode of conducting the war, and, perhaps, victories over France, would enable them to compass that which by arms alone they had hitherto failed to obtain.



They persuaded themselves that the Americans, tired of a long war, and finding their resources exhausted, would readily consent to an arrangement; or that, even if the Congress refused, the greater part of the nation, at least, would manifest an eagerness to listen to their proposals; and already they beheld intestine dissensions opening the way to the re-establishment of ancient relations, if not to an absolute subjugation.

To provide for this consummation, the clause had been added to the act of conciliation, which empowered the commissioners to treat, not only with any public authority, but even with every description of private citizens whatsoever. After having encountered an obstinate resistance in the inhabitants of the northern provinces, they had been assured by the refugees, in whom they put all their trust, that they would find far more pliable matter in those of the south. They determined accordingly to make these the seat of the war, in the hope, that as they abounded more in subjects devoted to the crown, they would manifest greater repugnance to combating the troops of the king, and more inclination to listen to his negotiators. Besides, the fertile lands and exuberant pasturage of these provinces, rendered them extremely accommodate for the subsistence of armies, at the same time that the inhabitants would have a motive in this very abundance the more to dread the devastations inseparable from war. But whatever was the foundation of these hopes, the ministers were resolved to resume hostilities as soon as the negotiations should cease to promise any result; in order to avoid the appearance of yielding to the threats of France. Without allowing themselves to be intimidated by the con-

sequences which might attend the war of America, they considered themselves bound by that regard which every state owes to its own honour and dignity, to try yet for a time the fortune of arms. If it proved necessary at last to acknowledge the independence of America, which was become the principal point in contest, they thought it could never be too late for that, and they reputed it better to submit honourably to adverse fortune and the decision of the sword, than to bow ignominiously, and without combat, to the menaces of an arrogant enemy. Such were the motives which influenced the British ministers in the present period of the war, and which were afterwards the basis of all their resolutions. But perfectly sensible that if England made no new overtures, the Congress would not fail to ratify the treaty contracted with France, and that it would become then much more difficult for that body to retract its resolutions, the British ministers hastened to transmit to America the bill of conciliation, even before it had yet been approved in parliament. They flattered themselves that the Americans thus finding that England renounced what had been the first and capital cause of the differences, that is, the right of taxation, all other difficulties would be promptly smoothed, and the ratification of the treaty readily prevented. This first point gained, the commissioners would only have had, as it were, to appear, in order to affix the seal to a definitive arrangement. Accordingly, copies of the bill were received at New York about the middle of the month of April. Governor Tryon, a shrewd and active man, as we have seen, after having caused it to be published in the city, found means to circu-

late it among the Americans, much extolling the good dispositions of the government towards America. He wrote at the same time to general Washington, and to Trumbull, the governor of New Jersey, requesting them, a thing really without example, to bring this project of an act of parliament to the knowledge of soldiers, and of inhabitants. Washington referred the whole to the Congress, that they might take the proper measures. Trumbull replied to Tryon in a very energetic style, that he was not a little surprised at this strange mode of negotiation between two nations; that in similar cases, demands and propositions are addressed, not to the multitude, but to those who govern; that there had been a time, indeed, when such a proposal of the mother country might have been received with alacrity and gratitude, but that such time was irrevocably elapsed. He reminded of petitions rejected, hostilities commenced and prosecuted with so much barbarity on the part of the English, their insolence in good fortune, the cruelties exercised against prisoners, injuries which had interposed an insuperable obstacle to reconciliation. "Peace, he added, cannot subsist but with our independence. The English will then find the Americans as sincere friends as they are now determined and dangerous enemies. If they would have peace, let them abandon all insidious procedures, and demand it openly of those who can grant it." Meanwhile, the Congress, on receipt of their general's despatches, deliberated upon the step they had to take.

Considering themselves as already sure of the assistance of France, and indignant at these new machinations of the English, they decreed that any men

or body of men whatsoever, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with commissioners under the crown of Great Britain, should be reputed and treated as enemies of the United States; that these States could not enter into any conference or treaty with the agents of Great Britain, except they should, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of the United States. Finally, it being the design of the enemy to lull the inhabitants of America, by this soothing sound of peace, into a neglect of warlike preparations, it was earnestly recommended to the different states to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible; and that all the militia of the said states might be held in readiness to act as occasion might require. The Congress then, in order to show of how little importance they esteemed the bills of parliament, and the intrigues of Tryon to diffuse them, embraced the generous counsel of causing them to be published in the public prints, together with the resolutions they had just passed.

But on the other hand, under the apprehension that many of those who had hitherto attached themselves to the English party, in despair of finding pardon in their country, might not only persist in their obstinacy, but profiting of the amnesty offered by the British government, might also employ their influence to draw over to its interest even such as had remained faithful to the common cause, they passed a resolution, recommending to the several states, to grant a full remission of all guilt and penalties, except the re-



strictions they might deem necessary, to all those who had borne arms against the United States, or assisted the enemy in any way whatsoever. Each individual was assured of pardon for the offences he might have committed up to that time, and the citizens were invited to a mutual forgiveness and oblivion of past wrongs and injuries.

But the English soldiers, in America, strangers to the political considerations by which states are guided, and bitterly irritated at the obstinate resistance of the Americans, were inconceivably shocked at hearing of the unexpected resolutions of the ministers. They were for absolute conquest, and submission without reserve. They could not endure this shameful condescendence; they asked why this ignominious retraction, why this solicitude to offer what at first was refused with so much pertinacity? They expected, upon the faith of promises, a re-enforcement of twenty thousand of their fellow soldiers, and they received in their stead—acts of concession. The discontent was so extreme in the camp, as to manifest itself in seditious words, and acts of violence: the soldiers in their fury presumed even to rend their colours; others, and principally the Scotch, tore in pieces the acts of parliament. If such was the indignation of the British troops, it is easy to conceive what was the despair of the American refugees. They saw blasted in a moment their confident hopes of returning victorious to their habitations; and perhaps some of them gnashed at finding themselves frustrated of intended vengeance.

With so much industry and so little fruit did the agents of England labour in America, to conciliate

minds towards the mother country; and with so much energy and success did the Congress endeavour to baffle all their efforts!

The second of May was the day destined to carry to its utmost height the exultation of the Americans, and to put the seal to the dismemberment of the vast and powerful British empire. On this day arrived at Casco Bay, the French frigate *La Sensible*, commanded by M. de Marigny. She had been selected as an excellent sailor, to bear to the Congress the treaties concluded with France; she had departed from Brest the eighth of March, having on board Simon Deane, brother of Silas. She brought, besides, happy news of all the European continent, and of an unanimity still more sincere than ever, of the people and of the princes in favour of America. The Congress was immediately convened: we shall not attempt to describe their satisfaction and alacrity at the sight of the treaties. They were ratified as soon as read. Unable to control the flush occasioned by so great an event, they forgot the rules of prudence. New states too frequently err in this; allowing themselves to be hurried away by an inconsiderate ardour, and impatient to communicate it to the people they govern, they are betrayed into impolitic steps. In this respect, widely different from ancient states; these, always cirsumspect and wrapped up in mystery, are reluctant to break silence even when every thing appears to exact it. The Congress at once made public the despatches they had just received; this disclosure was disagreeable to several powers, and especially to Spain, who would have chosen not to declare herself before the appointed time. The pro-

clamation issued to that effect spoke, not only of the treaty of commerce concluded with France, but even of the treaty of alliance; it announced, without any reserve, that the emperor of Germany, the kings of Spain and of Prussia, were determined to support them; that the king of Prussia, in particular, would not permit that the troops levied in Hesse and Hanau should pass through his territories, in order to embark in the English vessels, and that he would be the second potentate in Europe who would acknowledge the independence of America; that fifty thousand French were marched upon the coasts of Normandy and of Brittany; and, finally, that the navies of France and Spain, (as if the intervention of this power was already secured) amounted to two hundred ships, ready to sail for the succour of America. The Congress afterwards drew up and published a solemn address to the people of America: this piece was wrought with much care, though a little strange from its tumid style, and the religious sentences with which it was interspersed. It was recommended to all ministers of the gospel, of whatever denomination, to read this address to their congregations, immediately after divine service. It represented in the most vivid colours the vicissitudes of the state in the course of the late years; the virtue, the courage, the patience of the Americans; the perfidy, the injustice, the cruelty, the tyranny of the English: the assistance of God visibly afforded to the just cause; and the ancient weakness of the colonies succeeded by their present security. "The haughty prince," continued the address, "who spurned us from his feet with contumely and disdain, and the parliament which proscribed us, now descend to offer terms of accommodation.

“ Whilst in the full career of victory, they pulled off the mask, and avowed their intended despotism. But having lavished in vain the blood and treasure of their subjects in pursuit of this execrable purpose, they now endeavour to ensnare us with the insidious offers of reconciliation. They intend to lull you with fallacious hopes of peace, until they can assemble new armies to prosecute their nefarious designs. If this is not the case, why do they strain every nerve to levy men throughout their islands? why do they meanly court every little tyrant of Europe to sell them his unhappy slaves? why do they continue to imbitter the minds of the savages against you? Surely this is not the way to conciliate the affections of America. Be not, therefore, deceived. You have still to expect one severe conflict. Your foreign alliances, though they secure your independence, cannot secure your country from desolation, your habitations from plunder, your wives from insult or violation, nor your children from butchery. Foiled in their principal design, you must expect to feel the rage of disappointed ambition. Arise then! to your tents! and gird you for battle! It is time to turn the headlong current of vengeance upon the head of the destroyer. They have filled up the measure of their abominations, and like ripe fruit must soon drop from the tree. Although much is done, yet much remains to do. Expect not peace, whilst any corner of America is in possession of your foes. You must drive them away from this land of promise, a land flowing indeed with milk and honey. Your brethren at the extremities of the continent, already implore your friendship and protection. It is your duty to grant their request. They hunger



and thirst after liberty. Be it yours to dispense to them the heavenly gift, 'since a kind Providence has placed it in your power.' "

The Congress also published those articles of the treaty of amity and commerce which related to the reciprocal intercourse between the two nations, to the end that the inhabitants of the United States might govern themselves conformably to the same. They exhorted them to consider the French as their brethren, and to behave towards them with the friendship and attention due to the subjects of a great prince, who with the highest magnanimity and wisdom had treated with the United States on terms of perfect equality and mutual advantage, thereby rendering himself the protector of the rights of mankind.

Great were the rejoicings in all parts of the United States; the name of Lewis XVI. was in all mouths. Every where he was proclaimed the protector of liberty, the defender of America, the saviour of the country. These joyful tidings were announced with great solemnity to the army, which still occupied the camp of Valley-Forge; the soldiers were under arms, and all the corps formed in order of battle.

Meanwhile, the three pacificatory commissioners, Carlisle, Eden, and Johnstone had arrived in the waters of the Delaware at the beginning of June; they repaired to Philadelphia the ninth. General Clinton notified their arrival to Washington, praying him to send a passport to Doctor Ferguson, secretary of the commissioners, that he might without danger deliver their despatches to the Congress. Washington refused the passport, and his refusal obtained the special approbation of the government. The commis-

sioners then decided to forward their letters by the ordinary post. The Congress received them in their sitting of the thirteenth, with an express from Washington. They were read to certain words in the letter directed "to his excellency Henry Laurens, the president and others, the members of Congress." No sooner were they heard, than a violent clamour arose; many members exclaimed that the reading ought to be interrupted on account of the offensive language against his most Christian majesty.

The words were these, "We cannot but remark the insidious interposition of a power, which has from the first settlement of the colonies been actuated with enmity to us both; and notwithstanding the pretended date or present form of the French offers to North America, it is notorious that they have only been made, because it was believed that Great Britain had conceived the design of an amicable arrangement, and with a view to prevent reconciliation, and prolong this destructive war." After animated debates, the further consideration of the subject was adjourned to the next sitting. The question was agitated with equal vehemence the following days. Finally, the Congress having demonstrated by the warmth of this discussion the respect they bore to their august ally, reflected on the other hand, that it was more prudent to answer than to keep silence. It was easy to lay before the people such motives as were likely to dissuade them from accepting the proposals of England, whereas a refusal to notice them might occasion discontents prejudicial to the state. They determined accordingly to read the despatches of the commissioners. They consisted in the letter addressed to the

President of Congress, a copy of their commission, and three acts of parliament. The commissioners offered in their letter more than would have been required in the origin of the quarrel, to appease the minds of the colonists and re-establish tranquillity; but less than was necessary at present to obtain peace. They endeavoured to persuade the Americans that the conditions of the arrangement were not only favourable, but also perfectly sure, and of such a nature that the two parties would know for the future upon what footing they were to live together; that their friendship would thus be established upon solid bases, as it should be, in order to be durable. They declared themselves ready to consent to an immediate cessation of hostilities by sea and land; to restore a free intercourse, and to renew the common benefits of naturalization throughout the several parts of the empire; to extend every freedom to trade that the respective interests of both parties could require; to agree that no military force should be kept up in the different states of North America, without the consent of the General Congress, or of the particular assemblies; to concur in such measures as would be requisite to discharge the debts of America, and to raise the credit and the value of the paper circulation; to perpetuate the common union by a reciprocal deputation of agents from the different states, who should have the privilege of a seat and voice in the parliament of Great Britain; or if sent from Britain, in that case, to have a seat and voice in the assembly of the different states to which they might be deputed respectively; in order to attend to the several interests of those by whom they were deputed; to establish

the right and power of the respective legislatures in each particular state, of settling its revenue and its civil and military establishment, and of exercising a perfect freedom of legislation and internal government, so that the British states throughout North America, acting with those of Europe in peace and war, under one common sovereign, might have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege that was short of a total separation of interest, or consistent with that union of force on which the security of British religion and liberty depended.

Finally, the commissioners expressed their desire to open conferences with Congress, or with some of its members, either at New York, at Philadelphia, or at Yorktown, or in such other place as it might please the Congress to appoint.

Thus, to terminate a war, already pushed to a great length, those who in its origin would hear of nothing short of the absolute reduction of America, abated all the rigour of their conditions.

Meanwhile, the Congress took into serious consideration the state of affairs. The debates that ensued upon this subject, were drawn into length; not that any individual thought of renouncing independence, but all took an interest in the form of the answer to be given to the commissioners. The discussion was continued until the seventeenth of June. On that day the Congress answered with as much conciseness as dignity: they already felt how greatly their position was meliorated by the success of their arms and the alliance of France. Their reply purported, that the acts of the British parliament, the very commission of the agents, and their



letters to Congress supposed the people of the United States to be subjects of the crown of Great Britain, and were founded on the idea of dependence, which was utterly inadmissible: that, nevertheless, the Americans were inclined to peace, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which the war had originated, and the savage manner in which it had been conducted. That Congress would therefore be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, when the king of Great Britain should demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose; of which no other proof could be admitted but that of an explicit acknowledgement of the independence of the United States, or the withdrawing of his fleets and armies.

Thus, the Americans, steady in their resolutions, chose rather to trust to their own fortune, which they had already proved, and to the hope they placed in that of France, than to link themselves anew to the tottering destiny of England; abandoning all idea of peace, war became the sole object of their solicitude. Such was the issue of the attempts, to effect an accommodation; and thus were extinguished the hopes which the negotiation had given birth to in England. By not consenting to concessions until the time for them was passed, the English justified the refusal of the Americans. It cannot be affirmed that these overtures on the part of the first, were only an artifice to divide the second among themselves, to detach them from France, and to have them afterwards at their discretion, but it is certain that after so many rancorous animosities, so many sanguinary

battles, after the innumerable excesses of rapine, cruelty and lust, the Americans could not be blamed for suspecting the British ministers of a design to ensnare them.

The wound was incurable, and friendship could not be restored. This was a truth of universal evidence; the seeming inclined to believe the contrary was sufficient to inspire apprehensions of treachery, and the extreme of distrust in all flattering promises. Whoever shall reflect attentively upon the long series of events which we have related up to this time, will perceive that the Americans were always constant in their resolution, the English always versatile, uncertain and wavering. Hence it is not at all surprising that those found new friends, and that these not only lost theirs, but also made enemies of them at the very moment when they could do them the least harm, and might receive the most from them. Vigorous resolutions prevent danger; half measures invite and aggravate it.

But the chiefs of the American revolution were not without apprehension that the insidious caresses, the new concessions of England, and the secret intrigues of the commissioners might act powerfully upon the minds of such citizens as were weak or impatient for repose. The Congress however was not disposed to give any other answer except that which has been recounted above. They excited therefore several writers to justify their resolutions and to defend the cause of America. This course appeared to them the more proper, inasmuch as the English commissioners, having lost all hope of succeeding with the Congress, had resorted to the expedient of

disseminating in the country a multitude of writings, by which they endeavoured to persuade the people that the obstinacy of Congress would hurry America into an abyss, by alienating her from her old friends, and giving her up a prey to an inveterate enemy. This step of the commissioners furnished the patriots with a new argument to put the people on their guard against the artifices and intrigues of the agents of England. Among the writers of this epoch, deserving of particular mention, is Drayton, one of the deputies of South Carolina, and a man of no common erudition. He endeavoured to demonstrate in the public papers, that the United States having already treated with France, as free states, and in order to maintain their independence, they could not now negotiate with the British commissioners upon the basis of submission, without renouncing that faith and ingenuousness which ought to preside over all their transactions, without exposing the American people to be accounted faithless and infamous, and consequently to lose for ever all hope of foreign succours; while on the other hand they would find themselves placed without resource in the power of those who had given them heretofore such fatal proofs of their perfidy and cruelty. "Besides," he added, "the conventions that we might make with the commissioners would not be definitive, they would need the ratification of the king, of the ministers and of the parliament; and what assurance have we that they would have it? But let it be supposed, can we be assured that a future parliament will not annul all these treaties? Let us not forget that we have to do with an enemy as faithless and fraudulent as barbarous. How

is it possible not to suspect a snare, when we hear the commissioners offer us propositions which exceed their powers, and contradict even the acts of parliament? Thus the patriots repulsed the offers, the promises, and the arguments of the British commissioners. Finding no accessible point, the latter were at length convinced that all hope of conciliation must be relinquished. If they could still have remained under any illusion upon this point, it must soon have been dissipated by the evacuation which their generals made, at the same instant, of the city of Philadelphia, the acquisition of which had been the fruit of so much blood, and of two arduous campaigns. The ministers feared, what actually happened, that a French fleet might suddenly enter the Delaware, and place the British army, which occupied Philadelphia, in extreme jeopardy. Their design was, besides, to carry the war into the southern provinces, and to send a part of the troops to defend their islands of the West Indies against the attacks of the new enemy. The diminution that must result from it in the army of the continent, induced them to send orders to Clinton, by the commissioner Eden, to evacuate Philadelphia without delay, and to fall back upon New York. This measure, dictated by prudence, and even by necessity, was interpreted by the Americans as a symptom of terror: and it consequently must have had the most prejudicial influence upon the success of the negotiations. What need have we, they said, to enter into an accommodation with the English, when their retreat is a virtual avowal of the inferiority of their arms?



Be this as it may, Clinton prepared to execute the orders of his government. But in order to repair by land to New York, it was necessary to traverse New Jersey, a province, in which, for reasons already stated, he must expect to meet only with enemies. It was, besides, exhausted by long war. Foreseeing, therefore, that he might want provisions, the English general, before evacuating Philadelphia, had collected them in considerable quantity, and loaded them upon a great number of carriages. It is true, that as the fleet of Lord Howe still remained in the waters of the Delaware, the army might have been transported to New York by sea; the Americans themselves expected it, and Washington apprehended it much. But the difficulties and delays of the embarkation, and perhaps also the fear of encountering the French fleet in superior force, deterred the English from taking this route. Clinton and Howe having made the necessary dispositions, the whole army passed the Delaware very early on the twenty-second of June; and, descending the river a little, landed at Gloucester Point, upon the territory of New Jersey. It immediately proceeded, with all its baggage, towards Haddonfield, where it arrived the same day.

Washington was soon apprized in his camp at Valley-Forge that the British army was in motion; without loss of time he sent general Dickinson to assemble the militia of New Jersey under arms. At the same time, in order to support them by a respectable corps of continental troops, he ordered general Maxwell to march into New Jersey. Their mutual efforts were to embarrass, by all possible impediments, the retreat of the British army; to break up the roads, to

cut the bridges, to fell trees, and to plant them in abattis. It was recommended to them at the same time to avoid hazardous movements and unexpected actions. Such were the first steps taken by Washington in order to retard the enemy, until he could advance himself with the main body of his army into New Jersey, and observe in person what there was to be done. In the meantime, he assembled his council of war at Valley-Forge, and submitted to their deliberation whether it was proper, by harassing the enemy's rear, to do him all the harm possible, without, however, coming to a general engagement; or whether it was more adviseable to attack him in front, and try the fortune of a decisive battle. The opinions differed, and were for some time in balance. General Lee, who a little before had been exchanged for Prescott, considering the equality of the forces of the two armies, and the posture of affairs, become too favourable to be exposed without necessity to the hazard of battles, perhaps also having little confidence in the discipline of the American troops, was of the opinion that they should not be put to the test anew, and that an action should be avoided. He was for being content with following the enemy, observing his motions, and preventing him from ravaging the country. This counsel was adopted by the greater part of the generals. The others, among whom was Washington himself, thought differently, and were inclined, in case a favourable occasion should present itself, to engage a general affair. They could not bring their minds to endure that the enemy should retire with impunity during so long a march, and they persuaded themselves that they had every thing to expect from sol-

diers whose constancy, the rigour of the seasons, and the scarcity of things the most necessary to life, had not been able to subdue. They reflected, besides, that the English army was embarrassed with the most cumbersome baggage, and they doubted not but that, in the numerous defiles it would have to thread, some favourable occasion must offer itself to attack with advantage. Nevertheless, the opinion of the majority prevailed, not without evident dissatisfaction on the part of Washington, who, according to his character of personal pertinacity, remained steadfast in his way of thinking.

The same day in which the English abandoned Philadelphia, he moved from his camp of Valley-Forge, and crossing the Delaware at Coryells-Ferry, because Clinton was marching up the river, he went to take post at Hopewell. He was in great uncertainty respecting the designs of the enemy. Their slow march, which was the effect of the immoderate quantity of their baggage, and not a stratagem, induced him to suspect that their aim was to draw him beyond the Rariton, into the open plains of New Jersey, and then, rapidly, turning his right, to lock him against the river, and constrain him to join battle with disadvantage. He proceeded, therefore, with extreme circumspection, and did not allow himself to be enticed to venture across the Rariton.

Meanwhile, the English had already reached Allentown. Washington detached Morgan with his light horse to harass their right flank, while Maxwell and Dickinson infested them on the left, and general Cadwallader in rear. But when Clinton found himself in Allentown, he reflected upon the way he had

to take in order to arrive at New York. By turning towards the Rariton, he might proceed to Brunswick, pass the river there, push for Staten Island, and thence to New York. Another route presented itself on the right, by passing through Monmouth and gaining with rapidity the heights of Middletown, whence it was easy to repair to Sandy-Hook: from that point, the fleet of Howe, which awaited the army, could transport it to New York. General Clinton conceived it an extremely hazardous enterprise to attempt the passage of the Rariton with an army incumbered by such immense convoys, and in the presence of that of Washington, which he knew was soon to be re-enforced by the northern troops, under the command of general Gates. He concluded therefore to pursue the road of Monmouth, and immediately commenced the march. Washington, who till then had remained in doubt, because the road from Allentown leads alike to New Brunswick and to Monmouth, as soon as he got this intelligence, detached general Wayne with a thousand regular troops to re-enforce the corps of Cadwallader, in order to enable him with more effect to harass, and retard the enemy. The simultaneous action of the detachments of Wayne, Cadwallader, Dickinson and Morgan, being of extreme importance, the commander-in-chief put them all under the command of Major-general La Fayette. But the danger increasing at every instant, as the American van had already come up with the English rear, Washington judged it necessary to support it by other corps of regular troops. He directed general Lee to press forward with two brigades. As the senior, Lee took the command of



the whole van-guard, leaving to the Marquis de la Fayette only that of the militia and light horse. General Lee occupied Englishtown. Washington followed at a little distance with the main body of the army, and encamped at Cranberry. Morgan continued to infest the right flank of the English, and Dickinson their left. Things were fast verging to a decisive event. The British army was encamped upon the heights of Freehold; descending thence towards Monmouth, a deep valley is entered, three miles in length and one in breadth; it is broken with hillocks, woods, and morasses. General Clinton, seeing the enemy so near, and the battle inevitable, withdrew all the baggage from the rear, and passed it into the charge of the van, commanded by general Knyphausen, that, while himself with the rear-guard kept the enemy in check, it might be conducted without molestation to a place of safety, upon the hills of Middletown. The rear-guard, which he retained during the night of the twenty-seventh in his encampment at Freehold, consisted of several battalions of English infantry, both heavy and light, the Hessian grenadiers, and a regiment of cavalry.

The next morning at daybreak, Knyphausen descended into the valley with the van-guard and his convoy, on his way towards Middletown, and was soon at a good distance from the camp. Clinton, with the selected corps he had kept with him, still maintained his position, as well to retard the enemy, as to give time for the baggage to gain the heights. Washington, promptly informed of all that passed, and apprehensive that the English would effect their design of posting themselves in the mountains of

Middletown, the distance being only a few miles, in which case it became impossible to interrupt their retreat to New York, resolved to give them battle without further delay.

He ordered general Lee to attack the enemy in front, while Morgan and Dickinson should descend into the valley upon his flanks, the first to the right, the second to the left, in order to attempt the column of Knyphausen, incumbered with its long train of carriages and pack horses. Each put himself in motion to obey. General Clinton having resumed his march, was already descended from the heights of Freehold, when he perceived that the Americans were also descending with impetuosity in order to attack him. He was informed at the same instant, that Knyphausen was exposed to the greatest peril, his convoy being engaged in defiles, that continued several miles. Clinton finding himself under the necessity of fighting, instantly took the only resolution that could extricate him from the embarrassments of his position. He determined to turn upon the Americans who menaced his rear, and to charge them with the utmost vigour. He persuaded himself that thrown into disorder by this unexpected attack, they would hasten to recall to their succour the corps they had detached to intercept the baggage. Thus the English rear-guard, commanded by Cornwallis and Clinton himself, and the American van-guard, conducted by general Lee, and the Marquis de la Fayette, advanced the one against the other with a firm resolution to engage.

The artillery began to play, and the Queen's dragoons charged and routed the light horse of La Fayette. Lee, surprised at the unexpected determination

of Clinton to face about upon the Americans, and the rapidity with which he had carried it into execution, was constrained to form his troops upon ground by no means favourable. He had behind him a ravine which rendered his retreat almost impracticable in case of check. Perhaps also he was piqued at being forced to join battle after having supported the contrary opinion.

At the first charge of the English he fell back, not without disorder, probably occasioned by the difficulty of the ground. The enemy pursued him across the ravine and pressed him hard before he had time to rally. In this critical moment, Washington arrived with his corps. Having kept himself ready to move at any instant, he had pushed forward at the first sound of the firing, having ordered his soldiers to leave behind them whatever could impede their march, even to the knapsacks, which they usually carried upon all occasions. On seeing the retreat, or rather flight of the troops of Lee, he was not master of his anger, he addressed some very harsh words to that general, and applied himself with equal prudence and courage to restore the fortune of the day. It was necessary, first of all, to arrest for a few moments the impetuosity of the English, in order to give time for all the corps of the rear-guard to come up. Accordingly, the commander-in-chief ordered the battalions of Colonels Stewart and Ramsay to occupy an important post on the left, behind a tuft of wood, and there to sustain the first efforts of the enemy. Stung by the reproaches of his general, and stimulated by the point of honour, even Lee made extreme exertions to rally his troops. He disposed them on more

advantageous ground, where they defended themselves valiantly. The English were constrained to renew their attacks in order to dislodge them. But at length, Lee as well as Stewart and Ramsay, overpowered by number, were forced to fall back; they withdrew, however, without any confusion. Lee retired to rally anew behind Englishtown; but in the mean time the American rear-guard had arrived upon the field of battle. Washington disposed these fresh troops, partly in a neighbouring wood, and partly upon a hill situated on the left, from which some pieces of cannon, which Lord Sterling had planted there, severely annoyed the enemy. The infantry were drawn up in the centre, at the foot of the hill in front of the enemy. At the same time, general Greene, who in this day commanded the right wing, and who had advanced considerably on being apprized of the retreat of the van-guard, very prudently concluded also to fall back.

As soon as he was arrived upon the field of battle, he took a very strong position on the right of Lord Sterling. He likewise posted his artillery upon a lofty eminence, whence it cruelly infested the left wing of the enemy. The English, being thus arrested, and finding so harsh a reception in front, attempted to turn the left flank of the Americans; but they were repulsed by the light infantry which Washington had sent there for this purpose. They then directed their efforts against his right, which they endeavoured to surround. But overwhelmed by the artillery of Green, they were soon forced to retreat. As soon as Washington saw them give way, he



caused them to be charged vigorously by the infantry under general Wayne.

The English turned the back, and recrossing the ravine went to form anew upon the same ground where general Lee had made his first halt. Victory was no longer doubtful; but the new position of the English was still formidable. Their flanks were covered by woods and deep morasses, and their front, being protected by the same ravine which had deranged the troops of Lee in the beginning of the action, could only be reached through a narrow pass.

Washington, nevertheless, made his dispositions for renewing the engagement, having ordered general Poor to charge them upon the right with his own brigade and a corps of Carolinian militia, and general Woodfort to attack them upon the left, while the artillery should play on them in front. Both exerted themselves with alacrity to execute their orders, and to surmount the obstacles which defended the flanks of the British army. But the ground was so broken and difficult, that night came on before they had been able to obtain any advantage. The action soon ceased throughout the line. Washington would have desired to recommence it the next morning, with the day; he therefore kept all his troops under arms during the night. He was vigilant that every thing should be ready; sparing neither cares nor fatigue. But the thoughts of Clinton were very differently occupied. His van-guard and his baggage were already arrived in safety near Middletown. His calculation had not deceived him, for he had no sooner attacked the corps of Lee, than that general hastened to recall the light troops which had been detached to fall upon the

baggage and the soldiers that guarded it, as they filed through the valley. During the action, they had continued to march upon Middletown, and they had arrived the same evening at secure positions on the hills. Clinton, besides, had not to blush for this day, since with his rear guard he had repulsed the American van, and had finally arrested the whole army of the enemy. His troops were greatly inferior in number to those of Washington: but it would have been an imprudence, even for an army of equal force, to risk a new engagement, when so great a part of it was at such a distance, and in a country whose inhabitants and whose surface presented little else but opposition and obstacles. The loss of the battle would have been followed by the total ruin of the army. On all these considerations, he decided for retreat. He took advantage of the obscurity of night in order not to be followed, and to avoid the intolerable sultriness of the climate during the day. About ten at night, the Americans say at midnight, he put his columns in motion for Middletown, with so profound a silence, that the enemy, though extremely near, and attentive to observe him, perceived not his retreat. Clinton wrote that his march was favoured by moonlight. This circumstance afforded the Americans an abundance of merriment; it being observed that the moon was then at its fourth day, and that it was set a little before eleven at night. Washington, on his part, had to take into consideration the excessive heat of the season, the weariness of his troops, the nature of the country, very sandy, and without water; finally, the distance which the enemy had already gained upon him dur-

ing the night. He consequently relinquished the thought of pursuing them, and allowed his army to repose in the camp of Englishtown until the first of July. He took this step with the less reluctance, as he considered it now impracticable to prevent or disturb the embarkation of the English at Sandy-Hook.

Such was the issue of the battle of Freehold, or of Monmouth, as it is called by the Americans. If they had the worse in its commencement, it terminated in their favour. And it appears very probable, that if the division under Lee had made a firm stand, they would have gained the most decisive victory. The English, in this engagement, had three hundred killed, and an equal number wounded; about one hundred were made prisoners. Many of them also deserted, especially of the Hessians. Few were slain on the side of the Americans. On the one part and on the other many soldiers died, not of wounds, but of the intense heat of the weather, added to the fatigue of the day. Washington greatly commended his troops for the valour they had signalized, and particularly general Wayne. The Congress voted thanks to the army, and especially to the officers and commander-in-chief. But general Lee, a man of an irascible character, could not brook the indignity he believed to have been offered him by Washington, in presence of his soldiers. He therefore wrote two letters to the commander-in-chief, in which his resentment caused him to forget all bounds of respect. They occasioned the revival of an affair which the usual prudence and moderation of Washington would have inclined him to pass by. Lee was

arrested and brought before a court martial, to make answer to the three following charges: For disobedience, in not attacking the enemy on the twenty-eighth of June, agreeably to his instructions: For having made an unnecessary, disorderly and shameful retreat: And, for disrespect to the commander-in-chief in his two letters. He defended himself with great ingenuity, and with a sort of eloquence, so that impartial and military men remained in doubt whether he was really culpable or not. Nevertheless, the court martial found him guilty of all the charges, bating the epithet of shameful, which was expunged, and sentenced him to be suspended for one year; a judgment, certainly either too mild, if Lee was guilty, or too severe, if innocent. This affair occasioned much conversation, some approving, others blaming the sentence. The Congress, though with some hesitation, confirmed it.

On the first of July, Washington directed the march of his army towards the Hudson, in order to secure the passages of the mountains, now the English were in force at New York. He left, however, some detachments of light troops, and particularly Morgan's dragoons, in the lower parts of New Jersey to take up deserters, and to repress the incursions of the enemy.

While such were the operations of Washington and of Clinton in New Jersey, general Gates, with a part of the northern army, had descended along the banks of the Hudson, in order to disquiet the English in New York. By this judicious movement, the garrison of that city, under apprehensions for itself,



was prevented from marching to the support of those who were engaged with the enemy in New Jersey.

Meanwhile the British army was arrived, the thirtieth of June, at Middletown, not far from Sandy-Hook. The fleet under Lord Howe, was already at anchor there, though it had been detained a long time in the Delaware by calms. Sandy-Hook had been in time past a peninsula, which, forming a point, extended into the mouth of the bay of New York: but in the preceding winter, it had been disjoined from the main land by a violent storm and inundation, and converted into an island. The timely arrival of the fleet, delivered the army from the imminent peril to which it would have been exposed, had it been unable to pass this new strait. But a bridge of boats was constructed with incredible expedition; and the whole army passed over the channel into Sandy-Hook island, whence it was soon after conveyed by the fleet to New York; ignorant of the extreme danger it had so narrowly escaped.

The count D'Estaing, with his powerful armament, was at length arrived in the seas of America. After having made his appearance upon the coasts of Virginia, he had entered the mouth of the Delaware, in the night of the eighth of July. If he could have gained that position a few days sooner, and before the fleet of Howe had got out of the river, or even if he had fallen in with it on its passage from the Delaware to Sandy-Hook, it is beyond doubt that he would have entirely destroyed that squadron, which only consisted of two ships of the line, a few frigates, and a certain number of transports. The British army would then have been inclosed by the Americans at

land, and by the French at sea. Hemmed in by mountains and an impassable tract of country, it would have found it impossible to force its way to New York. Destitute of provisions, and cut off from all communication, it must have been compelled at last to surrender, and at Middletown would have been renewed the capitulation of Saratoga. This event might, therefore, have decided the fate of the whole war. But after having commenced with favourable winds, the voyage of the French admiral was so protracted by frequent calms, or by rough weather, that he not only did not arrive in time to surprise the squadron of Howe in the Delaware, and the army of Clinton at Philadelphia, as had been the scope of his plan, but also that he did not enter the waters of that river until the one was withdrawn to the anchorage of Sandy-Hook, and the other behind the walls of New York.

But though the land troops might think themselves in safety within that city, the fleet was exposed to manifest peril in the road of Sandy-Hook. As soon as the count D'Estaing was informed of the movements of the enemy, he promptly took his resolution. He put to sea anew, and suddenly made his appearance, the eleventh of July, in sight of the British squadron anchored at Sandy-Hook. His own consisted of twelve ships of the line, perfectly equipped, among which were two of eighty guns, and six of seventy-four; he had, besides, three or four large frigates. On the other hand, the British squadron was composed of only six ships of sixty-four guns, three of fifty, and two of forty, with some frigates and sloops. They were not in good condition, having been long absent from England, and their crews were

very deficient in number. It is also to be observed, that when the French fleet appeared so unexpectedly, that of Howe was not in the order of battle suitable to receive it. If therefore, the count D' Estaing, immediately upon his arrival, had pushed forward and attempted to force the entrance of the harbour, there must have ensued, considering the valour and ability of the two parties, a most obstinate and sanguinary engagement; an engagement, however, which the superiority of the French would in all probability have decided in their favour.

The count D' Estaing appeared disposed to enter; the English prepared to receive him. But such is the nature of the mouth of the bay of New York, that, though sufficiently broad, it is obstructed by a bar, which runs from Long Island towards Sandy-Hook, so that between the latter and the extremity of the bar, there is left but a very narrow ship channel. Nevertheless, the bar being at a certain depth under water, light vessels may pass it with facility, especially at flood-tide; but it was doubtful whether large ships like those of the French, could surmount this obstacle. The count D' Estaing took counsel of the American pilots, sent him by the Congress; he feared that his ships, and especially the Languedoc and Tonnant, which drew more water than the others, would not be able to pass. He therefore relinquished the enterprise, and withdrew to anchor upon the coast of New Jersey, about four miles from Sandy-Hook, and not far from the town of Shrewsbury. There, having recruited his water and provisions, he concerted with the American generals respecting the

expedition of Rhode Island, which he meditated, since he had missed that of the Delaware.

The English imagined that the French admiral was only waiting in this anchorage for the high tides at the end of July. Under the apprehension of an approaching attack, they accordingly prepared themselves for a vigorous defence. The ardour manifested on this occasion by their troops, both in the land and sea service, cannot be too highly commended. Meanwhile, several English vessels that were bound to New York, far from supposing that the French were become masters of the sea, fell daily into their power, under the very eyes of their own people, of the squadron, whose indignation was vehement; but they had no means of remedy.

Finally, on the twenty-second of July, the whole French fleet appeared at the entrance of Sandy-Hook. The wind favoured it and the tide was very high. The English expected an action which must necessarily issue either in a victory without example, or in the total destruction of their fleet; but after some uncertain movements, the count D'Estaing all at once stood off towards the south, and relieved his enemy from all fear. His departure could not have been better timed for the English; for from the twenty-second to the thirtieth of July, several ships of admiral Byron's squadron, which had been dispersed and shattered by storms and a tedious passage, arrived successively at Sandy-Hook. If the count D'Estaing had remained a few days longer on that station, not one of them could have escaped him. Of this number were the *Renown* and the *Centurion* of fifty



guns, the Reasonable of sixty-four, and the Cornwall of seventy-four.

Admiral Howe thus finding himself, with infinite gratification, in condition to resume the open sea, sailed in search of the count D' Estaing, whom he afterwards found at Newport in Rhode Island.

But previous to relating what passed between the two admirals, the order of history requires that we should recount what happened between the British commissioners and the Congress. The former had not entirely abandoned their enterprise, and they still continued upon the American continent.

Johnstone, one of their number, had formerly resided a long time upon the shores of America, where he had formed an acquaintance with many of the principal inhabitants of the country. He had likewise been governor of one of the colonies, where his active and cultivated genius, with his insinuating manners, had procured him an extensive influence. Being, besides, a member of parliament, he had there always warmly defended the cause of America, and had shown himself one of the most resolute antagonists of the ministry. These motives, to which perhaps it was owing that he had been selected for a commissioner, persuaded him that he might succeed in effecting in America by his suggestions and a private correspondence, what his colleagues perchance could not have obtained by open negotiations, always subject to the restraints of circumspection and distrust. He believed, at least, that by enticing the principal republicans with brilliant prospects of honours and wealth, he should smooth the difficulties which impeded the operations of the commissioners.

It is not known whether he pursued this course of his own motion, or with the privity, or even by the command of the government. Nevertheless, the tenour of the letters he wrote upon this head, would lead to the belief that the ministers were no strangers to his designs. In fact, contrary to the uniform practice of those who exercise a delegated power, he praised the resistance which the Americans had made, up to that time, against the unjust and arrogant laws of England: a frankness he would scarcely have ventured, if he had not been guided by the instructions of the ministers. The style in which he wrote to the most considerable citizens, and even to the members of Congress, would sooner have caused him to be taken for an agent of that body, than for an envoy of the British government. He professed a desire to be admitted into the interior of the country, and to discourse face to face with men, whose virtues he admired above those of the Greeks and Romans, in order to be able to describe them to his children. He affirmed that they had worthily wielded the pen and the sword in vindicating the rights of their country, and of the human race; he overwhelmed them with protestations of his love and veneration. The Congress had some suspicions, and at last positive knowledge of these intrigues. They recommended to the different states, and directed the commander-in-chief and other officers, to hold a strict hand to the effect that all correspondence with the enemy should cease. By a subsequent resolution, it was ordained that all letters of a public nature received by any members of Congress, from the agents or subjects of the king of Great Britain, should be laid before that assembly.

Thus became public those letters addressed by Johnstone to three members of Congress, one to Francis Dana, another to general Reed, and a third to Robert Morris. In the first, he assured that doctor Franklin had approved the conditions of the arrangement that was proposed; that France had been induced to conclude the treaty of alliance, not from any regard for the interests of America, but from the dread of reconciliation; that Spain was dissatisfied, and disapproved the conduct of the court of Versailles. In the second, after lavishing praises on general Reed, he continued, with saying, that the man who could be instrumental in restoring harmony between the two states, would deserve more from the king and people, than ever was yet bestowed on human kind. In the third, which he had also filled with compliments, he admitted that he believed the men who had conducted the affairs of America, incapable of being influenced by improper motives, and added the following words: "but in all such transactions there is risk; and I think that whoever ventures, should be secured, at the same time, that honour and emolument should naturally follow the fortunes of those who have steered the vessel in the storm, and brought her safely into port. I think Washington and the President have a right to every favour that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interests, and spare the miseries and devastations of war." Such were the baits with which, as the Americans said, George Johnstone attempted the fidelity of the first authorities of the United States: such were the words of blandishment he caused to resound in their ears, in order to seduce

them to betray their country. But that which gave the Congress most offence, and which they profited of with the greatest address to render the British cause and propositions alike odious to the inhabitants of America, was the following transaction: General Reed stated that a lady had sought him on the part of Johnstone, and had earnestly exhorted him to promote the re-union of the two countries, promising, in case of success, a reward of ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the colonies in the king's gift. The general replied, as he affirmed, *that he was not worth purchasing; but that such as he was, the king of Great Britain was not rich enough to do it.* The Congress, in their indignation, declared that these being direct attempts to corrupt and bribe the Congress of the United States of America, it was incompatible with their honour to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with George Johnstone; especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty and virtue was interested.

This declaration, which was sent by a flag to the commissioners, produced a very severe answer from Johnstone, which, if he had clothed in more moderate language, would have gained him more credit with his readers. He affected to consider the declaration of Congress as an honour, and not as a matter of offence; he observed that while that assembly only contended for the essential privileges necessary to the preservation of their liberty and the redress of their grievances, their censure would have filled his soul with bitterness and with grief; but since the Congress, deaf to the piteous cries of so many citizens overwhelmed by the calamities of war, had sullied



by motives of personal ambition the principles of their first resistance; since he saw them bend the knee before the ambassador of France, and form alliance with the ancient enemy of the two countries, with the manifest intention of reducing the power of the mother country, he was quite unconcerned what might be the opinions of such men with regard to him. As to the accusations drawn from his letters, he neither denied nor confessed. He simply affirmed, that the present resolution of Congress was no better founded than that they had taken concerning the cartridge-boxes of Burgoyne's army. He reserved, however, the liberty of justifying his conduct, before his departure from America; and added, that in the meantime, he should abstain from acting in the character of a commissioner.

His colleagues, Carlisle, Clinton and Eden, issued a counter-declaration, wherein they disclaimed all participation and knowledge of the matters specified by the Congress in their resolutions. They expressed, at the same time, the highest opinion of the abilities of Johnstone, of the uprightness of his intentions, and of the equity and generosity of those sentiments and principles upon which he was desirous of founding a reconciliation between the disunited parts of the British empire.

But the design of the commissioners in this declaration was not so much to exculpate themselves, as to counteract the impression produced by the treaties with France, and to demonstrate to the people at large that Congress had no right to ratify them. They had placed great hopes in this step. They were not ignorant that many Americans had abated their ar-

dour, and even conceived a secret discontent, since the much magnified succour of the count D'Estaing had proved of so little, or rather of no utility. The commissioners were also, as usual, stimulated by the refugees, who reminded them continually of the multitude and power of the loyalists. They expatiated, therefore, upon the perfidy of France, upon the ambition of Congress, and they exerted themselves, especially, to prove that the latter, in a case of this importance, where the salvation or the ruin of all America was at stake, had not, even by their own constitution, the power to ratify the treaties with France, without consulting their constituents; at a time, too, when such offers of accommodation were expected on the part of Great Britain, as, not only far exceeded the demands, but even the hopes of the inhabitants of America. They concluded with observing, that the faith of the nation was not pledged by the ratification of Congress.

The opposite party wanted not writers who endeavoured to defeat the effect of these insinuations. The most conspicuous among them were Drayton, already mentioned, and Thomas Paine, author of the work entitled *Common Sense*. Whatever were the merits of this controversy, it is certain that the publications of the commissioners were absolutely fruitless. Not a proselyte was made.

The British agents being now persuaded that all hopes of reconciliation were illusory, determined, before their departure, to publish a manifesto, in which they threatened the Americans with the extremes of the most desolating war that man could conceive. They hoped that terror would produce those effects

which their conciliatory offers had failed of attaining. This plan of hostilities had long been advocated in England, by the friends of coercion, as the readiest and most effectual. It would bring, they believed, such distress on the colonies as would not fail to compel them to submit. They represented the vast continent of America as peculiarly open to incursions and ravages: its coasts were of so immense an extent, that they could not possibly be guarded against an enemy that was master at sea; there were innumerable bays, creeks and inlets, where descents might be made unobstructed. The rivers were such as afforded a navigation for ships of force far into the interior parts of the country: thus it would be easy to penetrate to most of the towns and settlements, and to spread destruction into the heart of every province on the continent.

The commissioners, inclining to adopt these views, commenced their manifesto with a retrospect of the transactions and conduct of the Congress; charging them with an obstinate rejection of the proffers of accommodation on the part of Great Britain, and representing them as unauthorized to exercise the powers they had assumed. On the other hand, they magnified their own endeavours to bring about a restoration of peace and happiness to America. They gave notice, that it was their intention to return shortly to England, as their stay in a country where their commission had been treated with so little notice and respect, was inconsistent with the dignity of the power they represented. They professed, however, the same readiness as ever, to promote the objects of their mission, and to continue the conciliatory offers

that were its principal motive. Finally, they solemnly warned the people of the alteration that would be made in the future method of carrying on the war, should the colonies persist in their resistance to Great Britain, and in their unnatural connection with France.

“The policy, as well as the benevolence of Great Britain,” said they, “has hitherto checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people, still considered as fellow-subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage; but when that country not only estranges herself from England, but mortgages herself and her resources to her enemy, the whole contest is changed; and the question is, How far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless, a connection contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of France? Under such circumstances, the laws of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Great Britain; and if the British colonies are to become an accession of power to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy.”

This manifesto, which was the object of the severest animadversion, and which was even condemned by several orators of parliament, and particularly by Fox, as cruel and barbarous, produced no greater effect upon the minds of the Americans than had been operated by the offers of peace.

The Congress immediately issued a proclamation, warning all the inhabitants who lived in places exposed to the descents and ravages of a ferocious enemy, to remove, on the appearance of danger, to the



distance of at least thirty miles, together with their families, their cattle and all their moveable property. But if the measures adopted by the British commissioners, were justly censured, those taken by the Congress are at least by no means to be commended. They recommended, that whenever the enemy proceeded to burn or destroy any town, the people should, in the same manner, ravage, burn and destroy the houses and properties of all tories and enemies to the independence of America, and secure their persons; without treating them, however, or their families with any cruelty; since the Americans should abhor to imitate their adversaries, or the allies they had subsidized, whether Germans, blacks, or savages.

Such are the excesses to which even the most civilized men are liable to be transported, when under the pestilent influence of party spirit. The British threatened to do what they had already done, and the Americans, the very thing they so justly condemned in their enemies. But impassioned man is more prone to imitate evil in others, than dispassionate man to imitate good.

Some time after, lest the extreme rigour of the English declarations should give birth to new thoughts among the people, the Congress published a manifesto, in which they premised, that since they had not been able to prevent, they had endeavoured, at least, to alleviate the calamities of war. But they asserted that the conduct of their enemies had been the very reverse. "They," said the manifesto, "have laid waste the open country, burned the defenceless villages, and butchered the citizens of America. Their prisons have been the slaughter houses of her soldiers,

their ships of her seamen; and the severest injuries have been aggravated by the grossest insults. Foiled in their vain attempts to subjugate the unconquerable spirit of freedom, they have meanly assailed the representatives of America with bribes, with deceit, and the servility of adulation. They have made a mock of religion by impious appeals to God, whilst in the violation of his sacred command. They have made a mock even of reason itself, by endeavouring to prove that the liberty and happiness of America could safely be entrusted to those who have sold their own, unawed by the sense of virtue or of shame. Treated with the contempt which such conduct deserved, they have applied to individuals. They have solicited them to break the bonds of allegiance, and imbue their souls with the blackest crimes. But fearing that none could be found through these United States equal to the wickedness of their purpose; to influence weak minds they have threatened more wide devastation.

“While the shadow of hope remained that our enemies could be taught by our example to respect those laws which are held sacred among civilized nations, and to comply with the dictates of a religion which they pretend, in common with us, to believe and revere, they have been left to the influence of that religion and that example. But since their incorrigible dispositions cannot be touched by kindness and compassion; it becomes our duty by other means to vindicate the rights of humanity.

“We, therefore, the Congress of the United States of America, do solemnly declare and proclaim, that if our enemies presume to execute their threats, or

persist in their present career of 'barbarity, we will take such exemplary vengeance, as shall deter others from a like conduct. We appeal to that God who searcheth the hearts of men, for the rectitude of our intentions; and in his holy presence declare, that as we are not moved by any light and hasty suggestions of anger or revenge, so through every possible change of fortune we will adhere to this our determination."

At the same epoch, the Marquis de la Fayette, indignant at the manner in which the British commissioners had spoken of France in their letter of the twenty-sixth of August, in attributing her interference in the present quarrel to ambition, and to the desire of seeing the two parties consume each other in a long war, wrote to the Earl of Carlisle, demanding reparation for the insult offered to his country, and challenging him to single combat.

The Earl declined this meeting, saying, that as he had acted on that occasion in the character of a commissioner, his language and conduct had been official, and consequently he was accountable for them to no one except to his king and country. He concluded his answer with observing, that in regard to national disputes, they would be better adjusted when admiral Byron and the count D'Estaing should have met upon the ocean.

A short time after, the commissioners, unable to effect any of the objects of their mission, embarked for England. All hope from negotiation being now vanished, every thought was devoted with new ardour to the way of arms. Meanwhile, the Congress had returned to Philadelphia, a few days after the English evacuated that city. On the sixth of August

they received publicly and with all the ceremonies usual on similar occasions, M. Gerard, minister plenipotentiary of the king of France. This envoy delivered at first his letters of credence, which were signed by Lewis XVI. and directed *to his very dear great friends and allies, the president and members of the General Congress of the United States of America.* He made a very apposite speech, in which he set forth the benevolent intentions of France towards the United States, and the reciprocal obligation of the two contracting parties to execute the engagements stipulated in the eventual treaty, in order to defeat the hostile measures and designs of the common enemy. He announced, that on his part, his most christian majesty had already sent to their assistance a numerous and powerful fleet. He closed with expressing a hope that the principles which might be adopted by the respective governments would tend to strengthen those bonds of union which had originated in the mutual interest of the two nations.

The president, Henry Laurens, answered with much ease and dignity; That the present treaties sufficed to demonstrate the wisdom and magnanimity of the most christian King; that the virtuous citizens of America could never cease to acknowledge the hand of a gracious Providence, in raising them up so powerful and illustrious a friend. That the Congress had no doubt, but that the confidence his majesty reposed in the firmness of the United States would receive additional strength from every day's experience. That since England, from her insatiable lust of domination, was resolved to prolong the war; and with it the miseries of mankind, they were de-



terminated to fulfil all the conditions of the eventual treaty, although they had no more ardent wish than to spare human blood, by laying down at once their resentments and their arms; that they hoped the assistance of so wise and generous an ally would at length open the eyes of Great Britain, and bring her to a sense of justice and moderation. The authorities of Pennsylvania, many strangers of note, the officers of the army, and a great number of distinguished citizens were present at this audience. The public joy was now at its height. All hearts were filled, not only with the hope of independence, for that was considered as no longer doubtful, but also with brilliant anticipations of future prosperity: the American empire, with the interference of France, appeared already established for ever.

Thus a king extended an auxiliary hand to a republic against another king! Thus the French nation came to the succour of one English people against another English people: thus the European powers, who until then had acknowledged no other independent nations in America, except the savages and barbarians, looking upon all the others as subjects, began to recognize as independent and sovereign a civilized nation, and to form alliance with it, as such, by authentic treaties. An event assuredly worthy to arrest our particular attention; since the discovery of America by Columbus, none of equal or of similar importance had passed before the eyes of men. Such, in America, were the fruits either of the love of liberty or the desire of independence. Such were the consequences, in Europe, of a blind obstinacy, or of a pride perhaps necessary on the one part; of

jealousy of power and a thirst of vengeance on the other!

The fourteenth of September the Congress appointed Doctor Benjamin Franklin minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of France.

We have already related how, and by what causes, the expedition of the Delaware, by which the Allies had hoped to destroy the British fleet and army at a single blow, had failed to have effect. Desirous, therefore, of achieving some other enterprise of importance, which might both honour their arms, and procure them an essential advantage, they resolved to direct their operations against Rhode Island. This expedition offered them greater facilities than any other; the situation of places being such that the land troops of the Americans, and the naval forces of the French could lend each other mutual assistance, and bring their joint energies to bear upon the same point. This design had been concerted between the generals of Congress and D'Estaing, while he lay at anchor off Sandy-Hook. General Sullivan had already been sent into that part, in order to take the command of the troops destined for the expedition, and in the meantime to assemble the militia of New England. General Greene had likewise been directed to proceed to Rhode Island; born in that province, he possessed great credit and influence among its inhabitants. The general of the British army, having penetrated the design of the Allies, had sent from New York considerable re-enforcements to major-general Pigot, who commanded in Rhode Island, which carried his garrisons to six thousand men. General Sullivan had established his camp near Provi-

dence; it was composed of about ten thousand men, including militia. The plan which had been agreed upon was, that while Sullivan should make a descent upon the island from the northward, D'Estaing was to force the harbour of Newport from the south, destroy the British shipping at anchor there, and assault the town with vigour. The British garrison, thus pressed between two fires, it was thought would soon, of necessity, be compelled to surrender.

The state of Rhode Island is principally composed of several adjacent islands, the largest of which gives its name to the whole province. Between the eastern coast of this island and the main land is an arm of the sea, which, extending considerably towards the north, expands into the bay of Mount Hope. This arm is denominated Seaconnet, or the eastern passage. Between Rhode Island and the island of Conanicut is another very narrow passage named the Main Channel. Finally, between the western coast of Conanicut island and the main land is found a third arm of the sea, known by the name of the western, or Narraganset passage. The town of Newport is situated upon the western shore of Rhode Island Proper, opposite to the island of Conanicut. At a short distance from the town, to the north-east, rise a chain of hills which stretch almost across the island from the eastern passage to the Main Channel. The English had fortified these heights with much care, in order to cover the town against an attack from the Americans, who were likely to approach by the north part of the island.

General Pigot prepared himself for an able and vigorous defence. He very prudently recalled the

garrison of Conanicut island, and concentrated his forces about Newport. He also withdrew into the town the artillery and the cattle. The posts that were dispersed in different parts of the island, and especially the soldiers who occupied the northern point, were ordered to fall back upon the town as soon as they should discover the enemy's approach. The part of the town which looked towards the sea was fortified with extreme diligence; vessels of transport were sunk in such places as might obstruct the approaches by water to the most important batteries, the rest were burned. The frigates were removed higher up for safer moorings. But to provide for the worst, they were stripped of their artillery and stores. The seamen belonging to the vessels sunk or destroyed, were employed to serve the artillery of the ramparts; a service they well understood, and greatly coveted.

Meanwhile, the count D'Estaing, on his departure from Sandy-Hook, after standing to the southward as far as the mouth of the Delaware, changed his course and bore to the north-east upon Rhode Island. He arrived the twenty-ninth of July at Point-Judith, and anchored with the most of his ships just without Brenton's-ledge, about five miles from Newport. Two of his vessels went up the Narraganset passage and cast anchor to the north of Conanicut. Several frigates entered the Seaconnet passage; the English on their approach set fire to a corvette and two armed gallies which had been stationed there. During several days the French admiral made no attempt to penetrate the Main Channel, in order to attack the town of Newport, as it had been concerted with the



Americans. This delay was occasioned by that of the re-enforcements of militia which general Sullivan expected, and which were deemed essential to the security of the enterprise. Finally, the eighth of August, all the preparations being completed, and the wind favourable, the French squadron entered the harbour of Newport, and coasting the town, discharged their broadsides into it, and received the fire of the batteries on shore; but little execution was done on either side. They anchored a little above the town, between Goats-Island and Conanicut, but nearest to the latter, which was already occupied by the Americans. The English, in the mean time, finding they could not save several frigates and other vessels of less force, concluded to burn them.

The next day, general Sullivan, who had moved from Providence down to that part of the main land which bears from the east upon Rhode Island, crossed the Seaconnet passage at Howlands-Ferry, and landed with all his troops upon the north end of the island. It appears that this movement was highly offensive to the count D'Estaing, who expected to have been the first to set foot on shore in the island. General Sullivan hoped that the attack would now be delayed no longer, when the same day, the ninth of August, signals announced the whole squadron of Lord Howe, who, on receiving intelligence that Rhode Island was menaced by the French, had hastened to the succour of general Pigot. Notwithstanding the re-enforcement he had lately received, he was still inferior to his enemy, considering the size of his ships, and their weight of metal. His squadron, though more numerous, consisted of only one ship of seventy-four, seven

of sixty-four, and five of fifty guns, with several frigates. He hoped, however, that fortune would offer him an occasion to join battle with the advantage of wind, or of some other circumstance. And certainly if, from the time he had taken the resolution of moving to the relief of Rhode Island, the winds had not retarded his progress, he would have arrived at the very moment when the French squadron was dispersed in the different channels formed by the adjacent islands; in which case he would have had all the chances of victory in his favour. But his passage was so difficult, that he was unable to arrive till the day after that in which the count D'Estaing had put himself in safety with all his fleet in the Main Channel.

Having carefully examined, as well the nature of the places as the position of the French ships, and having also communicated to the same end with general Pigot, the British admiral concluded that there was no hope left him of succouring the town, especially as the winds continued contrary. The harbour was so situated, the entrance so narrow, the apparatus of defence in the island of Conanicut so formidable, that the enterprise could not have been attempted, not only by an inferior squadron, as was that of Howe, but even by a greatly superior force, without temerity. For the same cause, if the French admiral, agreeably to the plan concerted with Sullivan, had been disposed to persist, and not to quit his station until he had afforded that general all the co-operation in his power, there is good reason to believe that the town of Newport would have fallen into the hands of the Allies.

But the count D'Estaing, like a true Frenchman, full of ardour and impatience, upon a change of wind to the north-east, in the morning of the tenth, was seized with an impulse that he could not master, to profit of this circumstance to sail out of the harbour, in order to attack the enemy. He accordingly stood out to sea, in search of the British fleet. Admiral Howe, on seeing so formidable an armament advance to engage him, and being under the wind, which gave the French the weather-gage, declined coming to action, and manœuvred with great ability in order to gain that advantage for himself. A contest ensued for it, which lasted the whole day; the French admiral striving to retain it with equal eagerness. The wind still continuing on the eleventh unfavourable to the British, Howe resolved notwithstanding to meet the enemy. He therefore formed his squadron so that it could be joined by three fire-ships, which were towed by the frigates. The French also disposed their ships in order of battle, and the moment already approached that was to decide which of the two powerful adversaries should remain master of the American seas. But at the same instant, a strong gale commenced, which, soon after increasing, became a violent storm. The tempest, which lasted forty-eight hours, not only separated and dispersed the two fleets, but did them so much damage, that they were both rendered unfit for action, and compelled to put into port to repair. The French squadron suffered even more than the English, especially in their masts and rigging. The Languedoc, of ninety guns, the Admiral's ship, lost her rudder and all her masts. Floating in this condition, at the mer-

cy of the currents, she was met by the English ship *Renown*, of fifty guns, commanded by captain Dawson, who attacked her with so much vigour and dexterity, that had not darkness interposed, together with the gale, which had not yet sufficiently abated, she must inevitably have struck; as she could only use seven or eight of her guns. Some French ships appeared with the return of day. They bore down upon captain Dawson, and gave chase, though without being able to come up with him. But they at least delivered their admiral from the imminent peril to which they found him exposed.

The same day, the English ship *Preston*, of fifty guns, fell in with the *Tonnant*, of eighty, with only her main-mast standing. He attacked her; but was compelled by the coming-on of night, to discontinue the engagement till next morning; when the appearance of several French ships constrained him to withdraw. The British squadron returned to Sandy-Hook and New York, for the purpose of refitting: the repairs were pushed with the greatest diligence. The French recovered the harbour of Newport.

In the meantime, general Sullivan, though impeded by bad weather, and other difficulties which had retarded the arrival of his stores and artillery, had advanced very near to Newport. He already had occupied Honeymans-Hill, and was engaged with great activity in constructing batteries. The besieged were not wanting to themselves: they erected new fortifications and new batteries, to answer those of the Americans. But notwithstanding their efforts, if the count D'Estaing, on returning from his more prejudicial than useful enterprise upon the sea, had



chosen to co-operate with the Americans, it is certain, that the position of general Pigot would have been excessively critical.

Assailed on the one side by the Americans, the English could not have hoped to defend themselves, if the French on the other, in addition to the fire of their ships, had landed, as they easily might have done, a strong detachment on the southern point of the island, in order to assault the left flank of the town, which was known to be the weakest. But the count D'Estaing had very different intentions. He despatched a letter to Sullivan, informing him that, in pursuance of orders from his sovereign, and of the advice of all his officers, he had taken the resolution to carry the fleet to Boston. His instructions were, it is true, to sail for that port if his fleet should meet with any disaster, or if a superior British fleet should appear on the coast.

The injuries sustained by the storm, and the information which had been received that Byron had arrived at Halifax, were considered as producing the state of things contemplated by the instructions of the ministry. The Americans, convinced that the departure of the count D'Estaing would be the ruin of the expedition, added entreaties to remonstrances, in order to dissuade him from so fatal a measure.

Generals Greene and La Fayette besought him that he would not, by persisting in his resolution, abandon the interests of the common cause; they represented to him the importance, to France, as well as America, of the enterprise commenced; that it was already so well advanced as to leave no doubt of success; that it could not be relinquished in its present stage

without shaming and disgusting the Americans, who, confiding in the promised co-operation of the French fleet, had undertaken it with alacrity, and made incredible exertions to provide the requisite stores; that to be deserted at so critical a moment would furnish a triumph to the disaffected, who would not fail to exclaim that such was French faith, and the fruit of the alliance; that the successive miscarriages of the Delaware, of Sandy Hook, and finally this of Newport, could not but carry to its height the exasperation of minds. They added, that with a fleet in so shattered a condition, it would be very difficult to pass the shoals of Nantucket; that it could be repaired more conveniently at Newport than at Boston; and finally, that its present station afforded advantages over Boston for distressing the enemy, while in the event of the arrival of a superior fleet, it would be no more secure at Boston than at Newport. All was fruitless. The Count D'Estaing got under sail the twenty-second of August, and three days after came to anchor in the harbour of Boston.

Whatever is to be thought of this resolution of D'Estaing, which, it appears, was not only approved, but even strenuously recommended by his council, it is certain that it made a violent impression upon the minds of the republicans, and excited loud clamours throughout America. The militia, who with so much zeal had hastened to join Sullivan in Rhode-Island, finding themselves thus deserted by their allies, immediately disbanded, so that the besiegers were reduced in a short time from about ten thousand men to not more than half that number, while the force of the enemy consisted of six thousand veterans.

In so abrupt a reverse of fortune, and seeing the allied fleet retire, while that of the enemy approached, the American general soon determined to fall back upon the main land, and evacuate the island entirely. He began the twenty-sixth of August to pass his heavy artillery and baggage towards the northern point of the island, and on the twenty-ninth he put himself in motion, with all the army. Though warmly pursued by the English and Hessians, he rejoined his van without loss. But the enemy coming up in more force, there ensued a very hot affair in the environs of Quaker-Hill, in which many soldiers fell on both sides. At length, the Americans repulsed the English with admirable resolution. In the night of the thirtieth, the corps of Sullivan recovered the main land by the passages of Bristol and Howlands-Ferry. Such was the issue of an expedition, undertaken not only with the fairest prospect of success, but which had been carried to the very threshold of a brilliant termination. The American general made his retreat in time; for the next day general Clinton arrived with four thousand men and a light squadron, to the relief of Newport. If the winds had favoured him more, or if general Sullivan had been less prompt to retreat, assailed in the island by an enemy whose force was double his own, and his way to the continent intercepted by the English vessels, his position would have been little less than desperate. His prudence received merited acknowledgements on the part of Congress.

Admiral Howe having refitted his ships with astonishing despatch, stood out to sea, and sailed towards Boston. He hoped to arrive there before his adver-

sary, and consequently to intercept his retreat thither, or at least to attack him in the outer harbour. He arrived, indeed, on the thirtieth of August, in the bay of Boston. But he was unable to accomplish either the one or the other of his designs: the count D'Estaing was already in port; and the batteries erected by the Americans upon the most commanding points of the coast rendered all attack impracticable. The British admiral, therefore, returned to New York, where he found a re-enforcement of several ships, which rendered his fleet superior to that of the French. He availed himself of this circumstance, and of the permission he had received some time before, to resign the command to admiral Gambier, until the arrival of admiral Byron upon that station, which took place the sixteenth of September. Lord Howe soon after returned to England. This illustrious seaman rendered important services to his country, in the campaigns of Pennsylvania, New York and Rhode Island, services which would have had more brilliant results, if the ability of the commanders on shore had equalled his own. Even to say nothing of the activity he displayed in transporting to a distant country so numerous an army as that of his brother Sir William, the talent and firmness with which he surmounted the obstacles that opposed his entrance into the Delaware, deserve the highest commendation. When the count D'Estaing made his appearance with a formidable fleet, and much superior to his own, he nevertheless prepared to receive him at Sandy-Hook; afterwards by offering him battle he baffled his designs against Newport; and then the French admiral, disabled by the tempest,



forced to seek refuge in the port of Boston, issued no more except to make the best of his way to the West Indies; thus totally abandoning the execution of the plan concerted by the Allies for the campaign of this year upon the coasts of America. Finding Newport secure, general Clinton returned to New York. He afterwards detached general Grey, who was at New London, upon an expedition of much importance, towards the east. Buzzards-Bay, and the adjacent rivers, served as a retreat for a multitude of privateers, the number and boldness of which occasioned infinite prejudice to the British commerce of New York, Long Island and Rhode Island. Clinton resolved to chastise an enemy that seemed to defy him, and to put an end to his maritime excursions. This task was committed to the charge of general Grey. He arrived with some transports, effected his landing in the bay, and destroyed about sixty large vessels, besides a number of small craft. Proceeding then to New Bedford and Fair Haven, upon the banks of the river Acushnet, and conducting himself more like a pirate than a real soldier, he destroyed or burned ware-houses of immense value, full of sugar, rum, molasses, tobacco, drugs and other merchandise. Not content with these ravages, he passed into the neighbouring island, called Marthas-Vineyard, the soil of which is very fertile, and which served as a refuge for the most daring cruisers. He levied on the inhabitants a contribution of live stock, to the great refreshment of the garrisons of New York. He carried off, besides, a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition.

Returned to New York, he soon undertook another expedition, against the village of Old Tappan, where he surprised a regiment of American light-horse. His conduct on this occasion was not exempt from the reproach of cruelty. A few days after, the English made an incursion against Little-Egg-Harbour, upon the coast of New Jersey, where they destroyed much shipping, and brought off a considerable booty. They afterwards attacked by surprise the legion of Pulawsky, and made great slaughter of it. The carnage would have been still greater, if Pulawsky had not come up, with his usual bravery, at the head of his cavalry. The English re-embarked, and returned to New York.

It was at this epoch that the French and American generals meditated a new expedition against Canada. Besides the possession of so important a province, there appeared a possibility of ruining the British fisheries upon the banks of Newfoundland, and, by reducing the cities of Quebec and Halifax, of putting an end to the maritime power of England upon those shores. The French were the principal movers of this enterprise: their minister, and D'Estaing, perhaps, with covert views: the Marquis de la Fayette, whose youth answered for his ignorance of these political wiles, with frankness, and from the love of glory. He was to have been employed in the expedition as one of the first generals. The count D'Estaing published a manifesto, addressed to the Canadians, in the name of his king, in which, after reminding them of their French origin, their ancient exploits, and the happiness they had enjoyed under

the paternal sceptre of the Bourbons, he declared that all the ancient subjects of the king in North America, who should cease to acknowledge the English domination, should find safety and protection. But Washington showed himself opposed to this project, and he developed his motives to the Congress: his opinion prevailed.

The Congress alleged that their finances, their arsenals, their magazines, their armies, were not in a state to warrant the undertaking of so vast an enterprise; and that they should experience too pungent regrets to find themselves in the event unable to fulfil their engagements towards their allies. Such was their public language; but the truth is, they apprehended a snare, and that the conquest of Canada would have been made for France, and not for America.

The retreat of the count D'Estaing, at the moment when Newport was about to fall into the power of the combined armies, had greatly irritated the minds of the Americans, particularly in the northern provinces. Many began to entertain a loathing towards allies who seemed to forget all interests except their own. To this motive of aversion was added the remembrance, still recent, especially with the lower classes, of ancient quarrels and national jealousies, which the new alliance, and the need of French succours, had not sufficed to obliterate. Washington and other leading Americans endeavoured to appease these discontents, which, they foresaw, might lead to serious mischief. The count D'Estaing, on his part, was no less careful during his stay in the port of Boston, not only to avoid all occasion of misunderstanding,

but also to conciliate by every means in his power the affection of his new allies. The conduct of the French officers, and even of the common sailors, was truly exemplary. This extreme circumspection, however, did not prevent the occurrence, on the thirteenth of September, of a violent affray between some Bostonians and the French. The latter were overpowered by number, and the Chevalier de Saint Sauveur lost his life in it. The select men of the town, to allay the resentment of the French, showed themselves very solicitous to punish the offenders. They published a reward to whoever should make known the authors of the tumult. They declared, at the same time, that the citizens had not been in fault, but English sailors made prisoners by the cruisers, and deserters from the army of Burgoyne, who had enlisted in the Boston privateers. Tranquillity was restored. The count D'Estaing, whether he was satisfied, or that from prudence he chose to appear so, made no further inquiry into this affair. No offender was discovered. The government of Massachusetts decreed a monument to be erected to Saint Sauveur.

The night of the sixth of the same month of September had witnessed a scene far more serious, at Charleston, South Carolina, between the French and American sailors. It terminated in a formal battle. The Americans were the first to provoke their allies by the most reproachful language: the latter resented it. From words it came to blows; the French were soon driven out of the city, and forced to take refuge on board their ships. Thence they fired with artillery and musketry against the town: the Americans, on their part, fired upon the French vessels from the ad-



joining wharfs and shore. Many lives were lost on both sides. A reward of a thousand pounds sterling was promised, but in vain, to whoever should discover the authors of this broil. The commander-in-chief of the province exhorted the inhabitants, in a proclamation, to consider the French as good and faithful allies, and friends. There was even a law passed, about this time, to prevent the recurrence of similar licentiousness, whether of words or actions. Thus ended the riots of Boston and of Charleston, which were attributed, if not with truth, at least with prudence, to British artifice and instigation. For the chiefs of the American government were not without apprehension that these animosities might deprive them of their new allies, whose resolutions, they knew, were not irrevocable.

The savages took a more active part than ever in the campaign of this year. Though they had been intimidated by the success of general Gates, and had sent him congratulations for himself and the United States, the intrigues and presents of the British agents had not lost their power over them. Moreover, the emigrant colonists, who had retired amongst these barbarians, excited them continually by instigations, which, together with their natural thirst for blood and pillage, determined them without scruple to make incursions upon the northern frontiers, where they spread terror and desolation. The most ruthless chiefs that guided them in these sanguinary expeditions, were colonel Butler, who had already signalized himself in this war, and a certain Brandt, born of mixed blood, the most ferocious being ever produced by human nature, often too prodigal of

similar monsters. They spared neither age, nor sex, nor condition, nor even their own kindred: every where indiscriminately they carried devastation and death. The knowledge which the refugees had of the country, the insulated position of the habitations, scattered here and there in the wilderness, the distance from the seat of government, and the necessity of employing the national force in other remote parts, offered the Indians every facility for executing their enterprises, and retiring with impunity. No means had hitherto been found of repressing the inroads of so cruel an enemy.

But in the midst of this general devastation, there happened an event which, perhaps, would be found without example in the history of inhuman men. Inhabitants of Connecticut, had planted on the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, towards the extremity of Pennsylvania, and upon the road of Oswego, the settlement of Wyoming. Populous and flourishing, its prosperity was the subject of admiration. It consisted of eight townships, each containing a square of five miles, beautifully situated on both sides of the river. The mildness of the climate answered to the fertility of the soil. The inhabitants were strangers alike to excessive wealth, which elates and depraves, and to poverty, which discourages and degrades. All lived in a happy mediocrity, frugal of their own, and coveting nothing from others. Incessantly occupied in rural toils, they avoided idleness, and all the vices of which it is the source. In a word, this little country presented in reality the image of those fabulous times which the poets have described under the name of the *Golden Age*. But their domestic

felicity was no counterpoise to the zeal with which they were animated for the common cause; they took up arms and flew to succour their country. It is said they had furnished to the army no less than a thousand soldiers, a number truly prodigious for so feeble a population, and so happy in their homes. Yet, notwithstanding the drain of all this vigorous youth, the abundance of harvests sustained no diminution. Their crowded granaries, and pastures replenished with fat cattle, offered an exhaustless resource to the American army.

But neither so many advantages, nor even the retired situation of these unfortunate colonists, could exempt them from the baneful influence of party spirit. Although the tories, as they called them, were not so numerous as the partisans of liberty, yet they challenged attention by the arrogance of their character and the extent of their pretensions. Hence, not only families were seen armed against families, but even sons sided against their fathers, brothers against brothers, and, at last, wives against husbands. So true it is, that no virtue is proof against the fanaticism of opinion, and no happiness against political divisions. The tories were, besides, exasperated at their losses in the incursions they had made in company with the savages in the preceding campaign: but that which envenomed them the most was, that several individuals of the same party, who, having quitted their habitations, were come to claim hospitality, then so much in honour among the Americans, and particularly at Wyoming, had been arrested as suspected persons, and sent to take their trial in Con-

necticut. Others had been expelled from the colony. Thus hatreds became continually more and more rancorous. The tories swore revenge: they coalesced with the Indians. The time was favourable, as the youth of Wyoming were at the army. In order the better to secure success, and to surprise their enemies before they should think of standing upon their defence, they resorted to artifice. They pretended the most friendly dispositions, while they meditated only war and vengeance.

A few weeks before they purposed to execute their horrible enterprise, they sent several messengers, charged with protestations of their earnest desire to cultivate peace. These perfidies lulled the inhabitants of Wyoming into a deceitful security, while they procured the tories and savages the means of concerting with their partisans, and of observing the immediate state of the colony. Notwithstanding the solemn assurances of the Indians, the colonists, as it often happens when great calamities are about to fall on a people, seemed to have a sort of presentiment of their approaching fate. They wrote to Washington, praying him to send them immediate assistance. Their despatches did not reach him: they were intercepted by the Pennsylvanian loyalists; and they would, besides, have arrived too late. The savages had already made their appearance upon the frontiers of the colony: the plunder they had made there was of little importance, but the cruelties they had perpetrated were affrightful: the mournful prelude of those more terrible scenes which were shortly to follow!

About the commencement of the month of July, the Indians suddenly appeared in force upon the



banks of the Susquehanna. They were headed by the John Butler and Brandt already named, with other chiefs of their nation, distinguished by their extreme ferocity in the preceding expeditions. This troop amounted in all to sixteen hundred men, of whom less than a fourth were Indians, and the rest tories, disguised and painted to resemble them: the officers, however, wore the uniforms of their rank, and had the appearance of regulars. The colonists of Wyoming, finding their friends so remote, and their enemies so near, had constructed for their security four forts, in which, and upon different points of the frontier, they had distributed about five hundred men. The whole colony was placed under the command of Zebulon Butler, cousin of John, a man, who with some courage, was totally devoid of capacity. He was even accused of treachery; but this imputation is not proved. It is at least certain that one of the forts which stood nearest to the frontiers, was entrusted to soldiers infected with the opinions of the tories, and who gave it up, without resistance, at the first approach of the enemy. The second, on being vigorously assaulted, surrendered at discretion. The savages spared, it is true, the women and children, but butchered all the rest without exception. Zebulon then withdrew, with all his people, into the principal fort, called Kingston. The old men, the women, the children, the sick, in a word all that were unable to bear arms repaired thither in throngs, and uttering lamentable cries, as to the last refuge where any hope of safety remained. The position was susceptible of defence; and if Zebulon had held firm he might have hoped to withstand the enemy until the arrival

of succours. But John Butler was lavish of promises in order to draw him out, in which he succeeded, by persuading him that if he would consent to a parley in the open field, the siege would soon be raised and every thing accommodated. John retired, in fact, with all his corps; Zebulon afterwards marched out to the place appointed for the conference, at a considerable distance from the fort; from motives of caution, he took with him four hundred men well armed, being nearly the whole strength of his garrison. If this step was not dictated by treachery, it must, at least, be attributed to a very strange simplicity. Having come to the spot agreed on, Zebulon found no living being there. Reluctant to return without an interview, he advanced towards the foot of a mountain, at a still greater distance from the fort, hoping he might there find some person to confer with. The farther he proceeded in this dismal solitude, the more he had occasion to remark that no token appeared of the presence or vicinity of human creatures. But far from halting, as if impelled by an irresistible destiny, he continued his march. The country, meanwhile, began to be overshadowed by thick forests; at length, in a winding path, he perceived a flag which seemed to wave him on. The individual who bore it, as if afraid of treachery from his side, retired as he advanced, still making the same signals. But already the Indians, who knew the country, profiting of the obscurity of the woods, had completely surrounded him. The unfortunate American, without suspicion of the peril he was in, continued to press forward, in order to assure the traitors that he would not betray them. He was awakened but too soon

from this dream of security; in an instant the savages sprung from their ambush, and fell upon him with hideous yells.

He formed his little troop into a compact column, and showed more presence of mind in danger than he had manifested in the negotiations. Though surprised, the Americans exhibited such vigour and resolution that the advantage was rather on their side; when a soldier, either through treachery or cowardice, cried out aloud, "*the colonel has ordered a retreat.*" The Americans immediately break, the savages leap in among the ranks, and a horrible carnage ensues. The fugitives fall by missiles, the resisting by clubs and tomahawks. The wounded overturn those that are not, the dead and the dying are heaped together promiscuously. Happy those who expire the soonest! The savages reserve the living for tortures! and the infuriate tories, if other arms fail them, mangle the prisoners with their nails! Never was rout so deplorable; never was massacre accompanied with so many horrors. Nearly all the Americans perished; about sixty escaped from the butchery, and with Zebulon, made their way good to a redoubt upon the other bank of the Susquehanna.

The conquerors invested Kingston anew, and to dismay the relics of the garrison by the most execrable spectacle, they hurled into the place above two hundred scalps, still reeking with the blood of their slaughtered brethren. Colonel Dennison, who commanded the fort, seeing the impossibility of defence, sent out a flag to inquire of Butler what terms would be allowed the garrison, on surrendering the fort? He answered, with all the fellness of his inhuman charac-

ter, and in a single word—the *hatchet*. Reduced to this dreadful extremity, the colonel still made what resistance he could. At length, having lost almost all his soldiers, he surrendered at discretion. The savages entered the fort and began to drag out the vanquished, who, knowing the hands they were in, expected no mercy. But impatient of the tedious process of murder in detail, the barbarians afterwards bethought themselves of enclosing the men, women and children promiscuously in the houses and barracks, to which they set fire and consumed all within, listening, delighted, to the moans and shrieks of the expiring multitude.

The fort of Wilkesbarre still remained in the power of the colonists of Wyoming. The victors presented themselves before it; those within hoping to find mercy, surrendered at discretion, and without resistance. But if opposition exasperated these ferocious men, or rather these tigers, insatiable of human blood, submission did not soften them. Their rage was principally exercised upon the soldiers of the garrison; all of whom they put to death, with a barbarity ingenious in tortures. As for the rest, men, women and children, who appeared to them not to merit any special attention, they burned them as before, in the houses and barracks. The forts being fallen into their hands, the barbarians proceeded without obstacle, to the devastation of the country. They employed at once fire, sword, and all instruments of destruction. The crops of every description were consigned to the flames. The habitations, granaries, and other constructions, the fruit of years of human industry, sunk in ruin under the destructive strokes of



these Cannibals. But who will believe that their fury, not yet satiated upon human creatures, was also wreaked upon the very beasts? That they cut out the tongues of the horses and cattle, and left them to wander in the midst of those fields lately so luxuriant and now in desolation, seeming to enjoy the torments of their lingering death?

We have long hesitated whether we ought to relate particular instances of this demoniac cruelty; the bare remembrance of them makes us shudder. But on reflecting that these examples may deter good princes from war, and citizens from civil discord, we have deemed it useful to record them. Captain Bedlock, having been stripped naked, the savages stuck sharp pine splinters into all parts of his body; and then a heap of knots of the same wood being piled round him, the whole was set on fire, and his two companions, the captains Ranson and Durgee, thrown alive into the flames. *The tories appeared to vie with, and even to surpass the savages in barbarity.* One of them, whose mother had married a second husband, butchered her with his own hand, and afterwards massacred his father-in-law, his own sisters, and their infants in the cradle. Another killed his own father, and exterminated all his family. A third imbrued his hands in the blood of his brothers, his sisters, his brother-in-law, and his father-in-law.

These were a part only of the horrors perpetrated by the loyalists and Indians, at the excision of Wyoming. Other atrocities, if possible, still more abominable, we leave in silence.

Those who had survived the massacres were no less worthy of commiseration; they were women and

children, who had escaped to the woods at the time their husbands and fathers expired under the blows of the barbarians. Dispersed and wandering in the forests, as chance and fear directed their steps, without clothes, without food, without guide, these defenceless fugitives suffered every degree of distress. Several of the women were delivered alone in the woods, at a great distance from every possibility of relief. The most robust and resolute alone escaped; the others perished; their bodies and those of their hapless infants became the prey of wild beasts. Thus the most flourishing colony then existing in America was totally erased.

The destruction of Wyoming, and the cruelties which accompanied it, filled all the inhabitants of America with horror, with compassion and with indignant fury. They fully purposed on a future day to exact a condign vengeance; but, in the present state of the war, it was not in their power to execute their intent immediately. They undertook, however, this year, some expeditions against the Indians. Without being of decisive importance, they deserve to be remarked for the courage and ability with which they were executed. Colonel Clarke, at the head of a strong detachment, marched from Virginia against the settlements established by the Canadians on the upper Mississippi, in the country of the Illinois.

He purposed also to chastise, even in their most sequestered receptacles, this ruthless race. Having descended the Ohio, he directed his march northward, towards Kaskaskias, the principal village of the Canadian establishments. The republicans came upon the inhabitants in sleep, and met with very little

resistance. They afterwards scoured the adjacent country, and seized other places of the settlement. Filled with dismay, the inhabitants hastened to swear allegiance to the United States. Thence, colonel Clarke marched against the barbarian tribes; he penetrated into their inmost retreats and most secret recesses, and put all to sword and fire.

The savages experienced in their own huts and families those calamities which they had so frequently carried home to others. This castigation rendered them, for a while, more timid in their excursions, and encouraged the Americans to defend themselves.

A similar expedition was undertaken, some time after, by another colonel Butler, against the tories and Indians of the banks of the Susquehanna: the same who had been the authors of the ruin of Wyoming. He ravaged and burned several villages, the houses, barns, harvests, mills, every thing was laid in ashes and desolation. The inhabitants had been apprized in season, and had made their escape, else they would doubtless have paid dearly for Wyoming. The Americans having accomplished their object, retired within their limits, but not without having encountered excessive fatigues and no little peril. Thus terminated the Indian war of this year. The republicans had not only to combat the English in front, and to repel the savages and refugees who assailed them in rear; they were also not a little infested by the disaffected within the country. Of this class none were more animated than the Quakers. At first, they had embraced, or at least appeared to embrace, the principles of the revolution, and even still there existed

among them several of the most distinguished patriots, such as generals Greene and Mifflin. Nevertheless, the greater number inclined for England, whether because they were weary of the length of the war, or that they had merely desired the reformation of the laws, and not independence. Perhaps too they had persuaded themselves, that after the conquest of Philadelphia, all America would be reduced, without difficulty, and that therefore it was useful to their interests to appease the victor by a prompt submission, in order to obtain favours from the British government, which would be refused to the more obstinate. They at least showed themselves forward to serve the English, as guides and as spies. Several of them, as we have related, had been sent out of the state, or imprisoned. Some had even suffered at Philadelphia the penalties denounced against those who conspired against liberty, and held correspondence with the enemy. The republicans hoped, by these examples, to cure the restless spirit of the opposite party. The efforts of the discontented were not however greatly to be feared; the open assurance and consent of the friends of the revolution easily triumphed over the secret artifices of their adversaries.

In the mean time, the Marquis de la Fayette, desiring to serve his king in the war, which he doubted not was about to break out in Europe, and hoping also to promote by his representations the cause of the United States with the French government, requested of Congress permission to repass the Atlantic.



Washington, who bore him a sincere affection, and who considered, besides, the importance of his name, was desirous that only a temporary leave might be granted him, without the discontinuance of his appointments. He wrote to Congress, accordingly, and they readily acceded to his views: they, moreover, addressed a letter to the Marquis, returning him their thanks for the disinterested zeal which led him to America, and for the services he had rendered to the United States, by the exertion of his courage and abilities on so many signal occasions. They also directed Doctor Franklin to present him with a sword decorated with devices commemorative of his achievements. Finally, they recommended him strongly to the most christian king. The Marquis de la Fayette took leave of Congress, and sailed for Europe, with the intention of returning as soon as possible. On his arrival in France, he was received equally well by the king and by the people. Franklin delivered him the sword, engraved with the emblems of his brilliant exploits. He was represented wounding the British lion, and receiving a branch of laurel from the hands of America, released from her chains. America herself was figured by a crescent, with these words: *Crescam, ut prosim*. On the other side was inscribed: *Cur non?* The motto which M. de la Fayette had chosen at his departure from France. This master-piece of art appeared a recompense worthy of the valiant defender of America.

The count D'Estaing still lay at anchor in the harbour of Boston, where he was occupied in victualling his fleet. This operation would have been of very

difficult accomplishment, from the scarcity of wheat experienced by the northern colonies since the interruption of their commerce with those of the south, if the privateers of New England had not made so considerable a number of prizes, that not only the fleet, but also the inhabitants of Massachusetts and Connecticut were thereby abundantly supplied. Admiral Byron was no sooner arrived at New York, than he applied himself with the utmost diligence to refitting his ships, in order to resume the sea. The moment he was prepared for it, he got under sail and stood for Boston, for the purpose of observing the motions of the French squadron. But the adverse fortune which attended him from Europe to America, seemed still to pursue him on these shores. A furious tempest having driven him off the coast, his ships were again so damaged and shattered, that he was constrained to take shelter in Rhode Island. The count D'Estaing embraced this opportunity of quitting the harbour of Boston unmolested, and sailed the third of November for the West Indies; where he was called by the orders of his sovereign, and the events of the war. The English, well knowing his designs, and the weakness of the garrisons in the islands of their dependency, commodore Hotham departed the same day from Sandy-Hook, and also shaped his course for the West Indies, with six ships of war. They had on board five thousand land troops, commanded by major-general Grant. Admiral Byron followed him, the fourteenth of December, with all his fleet.

About the same time, colonel Campbell embarked at New York, with a strong corps of English and Germans, upon an expedition against Georgia. He was convoyed by commodore Hyde Parker, with a squadron of a few ships. Thus the theatre of the war, after several campaigns in the provinces of the north and of the centre, was all at once transported into the islands and states of the south.

END OF BOOK TENTH,

AND OF

VOLUME SECOND.

















